# AGRI-NEWS

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January 2, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

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January 2, 1989
For immediate release

# Elzinga says trade and technology key to future

A crystal ball isn't required to see future prosperity in Alberta's agricultural industry lies in strengthening worldwide trade and keeping on the leading edge of technology says the province's agriculture minister.

"Building a more competitive and diversified agricultural sector is one of the main goals of our government," says Peter Elzinga. "Looking to furthering our trading relationships and having producers and agri-business cashing in new technologies are critical ingredients in achieving that goal."

Speaking in a New Year's interview, the Minister says the approach of a new decade is a good time to focus on what industry challenges will be. "It's obvious, I think from today's current events that trade is a very critical issue. It's not an issue peculiar to Alberta or even Canada, it's global. And agricultural trade certainly is a top agenda item," he says.

In Alberta, there are three trade issues: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, implementation of the trade accord with the United States, and continuing marketing and trade missions throughout the world.

"While the GATT talks in Montreal weren't the positive development hoped for, our nation must continue to press for the end of the subsidy war between the European Economic Community and the United States. Reformed agricultural trade would certainly benefit the efficiencies and natural advantages that we have here in Alberta.

"It's a frustrating process to follow, because international negotiations are slow and problems on the farm from low grain prices are immediate. That is why our province supports the negotiations and has lobbied the federal government to continue to assist our producers. We've also done what we can in terms of cutting input costs," he says.

(Cont'd)

Trade and technology key to future (cont'd)

On the other hand, passage of the trade agreement by Parliament is a green light for accessing the American market. "Both Alberta producers and processors can't be anything but excited about freer trade," says the Minister.

Proven products such beef and pork have just needed the level playing field of lifted trade restrictions to take off, he says, adding that some of the necessary infrastructure is already in place to send more of those products across the border. Meat processing and packing plants and canola processing plants are good examples. The agreement also keeps the door open for milling wheats, malting barley, honey and breeding stock.

Elzinga says some people were confused when the trade accord was being discussed. "They thought our trade efforts would be focused only at the U.S. It's unfortunate that people got that impression because it's not true. Access to the American market has spin-off benefits in terms of economies of scale to serve the world marketplace even better.

"We've never cast other trade opportunities aside. As a government and as a department, we've relentlessly pursued other markets. This fall I led a trade mission to Europe and Shirley Cripps, the Associate Minister, was in Asia," points out the Minister.

Trade missions have been exciting and valuable. The excitement stems from the opportunities seen and interest expression. The value is in terms of sales made and the promise of future sales.

"It is exciting to realize the interest in Alberta products and our ability to deliver. Trade missions are key in terms of keeping up our profile and initiating contacts that turn into sales," says the Minister.

The minister says the trade missions he's been on have convinced him that marketing must be vigorous and continuous when competing with the world.

Marketing of Alberta products also has to take place at home. Albertans are familiar with the "Better Buy Alberta" slogan and have been spending more on domestic products. This summer another at-home marketing program was announced.

(Cont'd)

Trade and technology key to future (cont'd)

"The Opportunity is Now" is the name of the marketing strategy program. A joint effort of Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Food Processors' Associaton, the program is for three years with the government's $3 million commitment to be matched by the private sector.

"Our secondary agri-food industry has really come along in the last few years. This program should assist continued growth," says Elzinga.

ALBERTA RESEARCH ACTIVE

Technology intersects with trade. For example, many countries have indicated their interest in Alberta's uses of genetic biotechnology. Biotechnology was a $200 million industry in North America in 1985. By 1990 it's estimated to be worth $1.5 billion.

Here in Alberta biotechnology is booming. Livestock embryo sales to eastern Europe and Asia have become common. Biotechnology has other agricultural applications that are still being researched, and its just one area of agricultural research. Research is a thriving sector, its developments in turn add to the prosperity of the industry.

"When we talk about technological advances and research as necessary we are talking about survival. If the industry doesn't change it gets left behind, so farmers use new crops and crop varieties. Their machinery has changed. Their farming methods have changed. Research is at the bottom of all of those changes," says Elzinga.

Alberta has always had an extremely active agricultural research sector. The Alberta government has encouraged its continued growth because of the dividends, says the Minister.

"Our department is on the forefront of agricultural research. We have research centres and a number of excellent people working out of them--field crops in Lacombe, horticulture in Brooks, food processing in Leduc and farm machinery in Lethbridge.

"Research is so many things. It's exploring our potentials and finding ways to develop them. It's developing resources and conserving resources. It's identifying markets and developing suitable products. It's a key building block in both diversifying and maintaining agriculture," he says.

(Cont'd)

Trade and technology key to future (cont'd)

Another active ingredient in the research formula is Farming for the Future, a Heritage Trust Fund project that will be celebrating its tenth anniversary in 1989. "Farming for the Future has funded projects in universities, colleges, research stations and on farms. The results have been innovations that have been put to work," says the Minister.

All this activity spurred the formation of the Alberta Agriculture Research Institute to act as a co-ordinating body for all agricultural research in the province. "Through the institute we can set priorities and support long-term projects. Co-operation and co-ordination will mean resources will be used to their best advantage, with the best possible of results," he says.

The institute will also be key in getting the latest technological information out to the producer and the processor. By keeping them on the forefront of technological change, their products will be competitive in the international marketplace, he says.

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Editor's Note: This is the second of two articles from an interview with the minister.

January 2, 1989
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Herd health and pork production practices seminar theme

An English veterinarian consultant is one of the featured speakers at the annual pork industry seminar in Banff January 24 through 27.

Herd health and production practices is the theme for the 1989 edition of the Banff Pork Seminar. Mike Muirhead, of Beeford, England, will address three topics on that theme--methods of solving disease problems on the farm, mechanics of disease problem solving, and aspects of management and disease affecting reproductive performance--as well as being an "Ask a Vet" panel member. Muirhead has added to his international reputation through the "International Pigletter". He is one of four contributing authors in the publication.

Another of that publication's contributing authors is also a long time conference participant. Frank Aherne, a University of Alberta professor, is a member of the organizing committee and also will be speaking on sow nutrition.

Also sharing their expertise will be: Colin Whittemore from the Edinburgh School of Agriculture on nutrition; Roy Berg from the University of Alberta on breeding; and Ernie Barber from the University of Saskatchewan on housing.

The annual conference is designed for people interested in improving their knowledge and decision-making abilities in pork production, says Fred Schuld, head of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch.

Schuld says participants include commercial producers, agribusiness people, researchers, extension and education specialists and others interested in the latest industry information. The seminar draws participants from all of western Canada, but particularly Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Alberta Agriculture is one of the financial supporters of the seminar, along with the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board and the Western Hog Growers. Other co-operating agencies are the University of Alberta and the Alberta Pork Congress.

(Cont'd)

Herd health and pork production practices seminar theme (cont'd)

Department staff are very involved with the seminar. Marvin Salomons, regional swine specialist in Red Deer, was the seminar's planning committee chairman and will also speak about pig behavior. Also speaking will be: Schuld; Bill Stone, supervisor of the swine herd health program; Gary Finell, veterinarian with the swine herd health program; Alan George, Lethbridge regional swine specialist; Sam Jaikaran, monogastric nutritionist; and Brian West, animal waste management specialist with engineering services.

For additional information on the seminar contact the pork industry branch at 427-5320.

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Contact: Fred Schuld
427-5320

January 2, 1989
For immediate release

# Farm Machinery Research Centre evaulates airseeders

Farmers can get help choosing what type of airseeder has the best metering system for them with the assistance of evaluation reports and expert advice from the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge.

The centre has just released three evaluation reports on airseeders equipped with dual delivery metering systems. A current trend in seeding equipment, this system allows fertilizer to be distributed separately from the seed. Most conventional seeding systems combine the seed and fertilizer just after the meters for distribution to the openers.

Project engineer Lawrence Papworth says this type of system became necessary because farmers had to limit the amount of nitrogen placed with the seed. Papworth says several airseeders and drills now have the dual delivery system built into the design or as an optional feature.

"Airseeders are the most applicable machines for dual delivery systems," says Papworth, "because they can carry larger amounts of fertilizer than conventional drills."

The research centre began testing three different airseeders in the spring of 1987. The units tested were the Flexi-Coil 1100 and 1600 airseeders and the Morris Genesis II MA170 airseeder. The corresponding evaluation report numbers are 549, 564 and 542.

Dual delivery metering is an optional feature on the Flexi-Coil airseeders. Papworth says installation of the complete dual delivery system took one person about six hours. On the other hand, the Morris airseeder has the dual delivery metering system built into its basic metering system. Changing to the dual system took several minutes, says Papworth.

The three airseeders that were evaluated aren't the only ones on the market with dual delivery capabilities. "Airseeders with one main primary hose can be easily adapted to dual delivery distribution systems because they only involve working a single primary hose instead of four or five," says Papworth. He lists Bourgault, Blanchard, Concord and Victory as falling into that group.

(Cont'd)

Centre evaluates dual delivery metering airseeders (cont'd)

Other airseeders on the market that offer dual delivery systems are Dutch Eagle, John Deere and Leon. Papworth says these airseeders have more than one primary hose so their dual delivery systems usually are more complicated than airseeders with a single primary hose.

Grain drills can also be used to place fertilizer separate from the seed, says Papworth. This usually involves routing another hose to the shank or opener. Hoe drills that have and use dual delivery metering system are Cereal Implements and Haybuster, he says. Several no-till drills also use dual delivery systems.

For a copy of the evaluation reports, or further information on dual delivery metering systems, airseeders and grain drills, contact the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, T1K 1L6 or call 329-1212.

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Contact: Lawerence Papworth
329-1212

January 2, 1989
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Horse behavior specialist at conference

A respected equine behavior specialist will be one of the featured speakers at a conference for horse owners and breeders January 14 and 15 in Red Deer.

Dr. Katherine Houpt is a veterinarian from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York who has done extensive study of normal horse behavior patterns. She has applied her research to developing an understanding of how management is affected by equine behavior and how horse behavior can be affected by its management.

DR. KATHERINE HOUPT

Houpt has authored more than 30 scientific papers on equine behavior, and also has written numerous articles on the subject for magazines.

The Horse Breeders and Owners Conference is dedicated to the horse and its owner. Fifteen internationally recognized speakers will be taking part in the conference.

For more information contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 or in Edmonton at 427-8905.

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Contact: Bob Coleman
427-8905

January 2, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Decision with vision, a conference for farm women, will be held in Calgary February 23. The theme of the conference is "looking into the '90s". Participants at the winter conference will see how they hold the key to future use of agricultural technologies. The keynote speaker, Dr. Bob Church from the University of Calgary, says he believes that farm women will explore and communicate new information to the entire family becoming the promoters of new challenges and opportunities. Former Olympian Diane Jones Konihowski will tell participants about setting goals, pursuing them and how to be the best of what you are. Other sessions include: fashion and fabrics in the '90s, dollars in decision, marriage enrichment strategies, if it ain't Alberta--it ain't beef, vegetable gardening, you and your aging parents, and getting things in order. The registration fee is $25 and includes conference material, coffee and lunch. For further information contact district home economists in Strathmore (934-3355) or Airdrie (948-8551). To qualify for the early bird draw, registration must be received by January 23, 1989.

FARM ASSET VALUES AND NET WORTH DECREASE

The average net worth of an Alberta farm decreased just more than 20 per cent between 1988 and 1984 according to a national farm survey. The Farm Credit Corporation (FCC) survey was conducted in co-operation with Agriculture Canada, Statistics Canada and the provincial departments of agriculture. The survey says farm asset values and net worth have decreased nationally, but certain regions and types of farms have experienced growth. Net worth is the difference between assets and debts and represents the estimated amount of money a farmer would have if he sold his farm and paid off all of his debts. Farms in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada saw their net worth increase. Hog farms, except for Saskatchewan, boosted their net worth as did dairy farms across the country. Farmers who produce cash crops lost, on average, 22 per cent of

(Cont'd)

FARM ASSET VALUES AND NET WORTH DECREASE (cont'd)

of their net worth. This phenomenon was particularly evident on the Prairies, with a smaller drop in Ontario and increases in the other regions. Cash crop farms however, represent over half of Canada's farms. Declining land values were named as the culprit in the drop of net worth of beef producers. While Alberta farmers had the second largest drop in net worth, they still lead the country with an average net worth of $461,900. The survey also indicates that Canadian farmers have increased their liquid assets of cash, bonds and savings. Complete survey results are available from the FCC for $35.

DON'T BLOW IT

Innovation is key to soil conservation and that is the theme of the 11th annual Alberta Conservation Tillage Soceity (ACTS) convention in Red Deer January 25 and 26. Sessions will include discussions of conservation machinery, herbicide issues, the changing climate and successful methods farmers have used to preserve soil. Registration at the 1989 ACTS convention will also include entrance to the 1989 Grow Show which features the latest in machinery and agricultural services. For registation and other information call the ACTS office in Caigary at 274-0563.

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CORRECTIONS TO COMING EVENTS

Southern Alberta Pulse Growers' Association
Legion Hall (not Elks Hall)
Bow Island, Alberta.....January 10, 1989

Poultry Industry Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer.....February 27 - March 1

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# Final stabilization payments approved for 1987 bean crop

Final payments for the 1987 crop year have recently been approved by the National Tripartite Bean Stabilization Committee.

Participating Alberta producers will receive a final payment of $52.85 per tonne of beans they delivered, says Ken Moholitny, Alberta Agriculture's administrative director of centralized program support. This payment applies to Great Northern, red Mexican, pinto, black, pink, yellow-eye, and Dutch brown dry edible colored bean varieties.

The total stabilization payment is the difference between the 1987 national support price set at $485.89 per tonne and the national average market price. The national average market price was $373.04 in 1987. Producers received an interim payment of $60 per tonne. With the additional final payment, the total stabilization payment for 1987 is $112.85 per tonne.

Alberta producers in the program have already shared a total of $867,859 in initial payments, says Moholitny. The final payment for Alberta will total approximately $765,000 resulting in payments of over $1.6 million to participating bean producers in the province.

Moholitny also notes lower than expected final average market returns have resulted in a premium rebate of $0.76 per tonne. Each share of premiums by producers, the province and federal government is set at three per cent of the average market returns in the current year plus the preceding two years.

"Initially, the premium was set at $15 per tonne," says Moholitny. "Lower average prices changed the calculations making the premiums $14.24, so 76 cents per tonne will be rebated to producers and the two levels of government."

Moholitny says producers can expect the final payment sometime in February.

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Contact: Ken Moholitny
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Herd growth and performance in spotlight at beef symposium

Wide swings in temperature and a variety of other environmental conditions can determine how well cattle convert their forage into cash for the producer.

That will be one of the three topics for discussion at the third annual Alberta Beef Symposium February 6 and 7. The theme of this year's symposium at The Lodge in Kananaskis is "Growth and performance for total herd efficiency".

Keynote speakers on fitting cows to the environment will be Roy Berg and Howard Fredeen. Berg is a well known professor from the University of Alberta who has just completed a five year term as the Dean of Agriculture and Forestry. Berg's expertise is genetics and the Alberta beef industry is familiar with his pioneering work in hybrid and cross-breeding. Fredeen is now a private consultant and adjunct professor at University of Alberta, but was head of breeding and genetics at the Agriculture Canada research station at Lacombe.

The session also includes producer panelists describing the best type of cow for the dry range conditions of southern Alberta and the parkland area of the province.

The symposium's second session will look at growth and measurement. Jim Wilton, of the the University of Guelph, will speak on the importance of growth to a beef herd. The other keynote speaker, Gerry Bowes, of the Saskatchewan Livestock Association, will provide an update of performance testing. Bowes is the administrator of the federal/provincial ROP programs for beef, sheep and swine in Saskatchewan. Producer panelists will discuss a record and performance system for a seedstock producer and a simple performance and culling system for the commercial cow-calf man.

(Cont'd)

The symposium wraps up with a look at "modern tools to improve growth and herd efficiency". Mick Price will discuss using the tools of implants and repartitioning agents. Price is a professor of livestock growth and meat production at the University of Alberta. Ray Grimson, manager of Lakeside Farm Industries research division, will speak on the importance of technology to the feedlot industry. The final speaker, Keith Salmon, from the University of Alberta, will speak on the application of genetic engineering and biotechnology to beef production.

Dan McKinnon, of Airdrie, who is the chairman of the symposium planning committee will wrap up the symposium by putting the presented ideas in a practical perspective.

The symposium is jointly sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, the Alberta Cattle Commission and the University of Alberta. Registration forms are available from district agriculturists or local Alberta Cattle Commission delegates.

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Alberta Cattle Commission
291-4800

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# Topics diverse at horse industry conference

The annual Horse Breeders and Owners Conference will be living up to its billing as North America's premiere educational conference for the horse owner and breeder January 14 and 15 in Red Deer.

This year 15 internationally recognized speakers will be on the informative speaker and seminar program. They will cover a broad range of topics of interest and concern to the horse industry. Three of those speakers will be Donald Topliff, Jerry Bailey and Bob Coleman.

Donald Topliff, a professor at Oklahoma State University, will discuss interval training and conditioning. An accomplished horseman and certified judge, Topliff communicates the scientific in terms of what it means in the barn.

Topliff has authored more than 20 scientific articles on nutrition, growth and training. He has also contributed several popular articles to magazines.

DONALD TOPLIFF

JERRY BAILEY

BOB COLEMAN

Colic expert Jerry Bailey will share his knowledge on the common disorder. He will look at causes and how to recognize and assess colic symptoms. Bailey has practised veterinarian medicine in South Africa, the United Kingdom and Western Canada. He is currently on staff at the Western College of Veterinarian Medicine.

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Topics diverse at horse industry conference (cont'd)

Alberta Agriculture's provincial horse specialist, Bob Coleman, will discuss feeding horses in Western Canada. Coleman who worked as a nutritionist in the feed industry before joining the department, says he will talk about new research and how it applies to feeding horses on the Prairies.

For more information about the Horse Owners and Breeders Conference, contact the horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 or in Edmonton at 427-8905.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

Bob Coleman
427-8905

January 9, 1989
For immediate release

# Take care with meat

Consumers have to be aware that meat is extremely perishable and raw meat can rapidly spoil even in their refrigerator says Alberta Agriculture's food nutrition specialist.

Aileen Whitmore says meat cuts such as steaks and roasts may have a refrigerator shelf life of only four days. As the bacteria grow and reach high numbers, the natural red pigment of the meat is changed to a brown color. At this stage, says Whitmore, the meat is old but not bad. Ground beef or pork may discolor after only one day. This is a good indication of the meat's "age" but not how safe it is to eat, she says.

Consumers are used to a bright red color of beef, in particular, which occurs naturally as the beef is cut and exposed to oxygen in the air. In the retail meat counter, refrigerated meats are generally packaged with a film that allows oxygen to pass through it.

Spoilage bacteria, present in the air, eventually will cause meat to smell and taste unpleasant. This bacteria must reach numbers of 10 to 100 million per gram or per square centimetre of the surface of the meat before the meat is spoiled.

The storage temperature of meats affects the rate of bacteria growth. As the temperature is reduced, the rate of growth decreases so the same bacteria that doubled every 15 minutes at 20 to 37°C, only doubles every six to eight hours at refrigerator temperature.

When meat is frozen and then thawed on the countertop at room temperature during the day, the growth rate of bacteria will increase as the temperature of the meat increases, she says. Whitmore recommends thawing meat in the refrigerator to ensure bacteria growth rate is minimized.

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore

427-2412

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# New DA in Spirit River

Spirit River has a new district agriculturist who hails from Saskatchewan.

Kent MacDonald was raised in Moosomin, Saskatchewan and recently graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with a B.Sc. in crop science and extension.

While at university, MacDonald worked for both Agriculture Canada and Saskatchewan Agriculture in Saskatoon. After graduation he was a field representative for Newfield Seeds Limited in Nipawin. He also has experience working in the livestock and trucking industries.

KENT MACDONALD

MacDonald says he is looking forward to working with area farmers and agribusinesses in the Municipal District of Spirit River and Improvement District No. 20.

The appointment was announced by John Knapp, Alberta Agriculture's Peace region director. MacDonald replaces Kathleen Holder.

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Contact: Kent MacDonald
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For immediate release

# Agri-News has a new editor

Alberta Agriculture's weekly news package has a new editor who has stayed close to her rural roots.

Cathy Wolters was born in Vermilion and raised on her family's mixed cattle and grain farm southeast of the north eastern Alberta town. Her longest foray away from Alberta and agriculture was while attending Carleton University in Ottawa. She graduated with a Bachelor of Journalism degree in 1984.

CATHY WOLTERS

Wolters became familiar with Agri-News while working on her hometown weekly paper, the Vermilion Standard, first during two summers with the paper and then for more than a year after completing her university training.

Before joining Alberta Agriculture, Wolters was a researcher for almost three years with the government members' office research branch at the Alberta Legislature. She says working for rural MLA's kept her in touch with agriculture and agricultural issues.

"Agriculture is an industry in a constant state of evolution, with farmers and agri-business having to find their own niche in the technical and economic changes. Agri-News is a vehicle to give them the research, developments and advice that comes from a very active department working on their behalf," she says.

Former Agri-News editor Lee Hart is now with the Country Guide in Calgary.

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Contact: Cathy Wolters
427-2121

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Agri-News Briefs

THE TASTIER THINGS IN LIFE

Agricultural service board representatives in northeast Alberta had their eyes opened and taste buds tempted by a display of wares from food processors in their area at a recent conference in Two Hills. Diverse and interesting products were part of a "Savor Alberta Flavor" promotion organized by district home economists in the region says Edith Zawadiuk regional home economist. Zawadiuk says product displays and samples included oyster mushrooms, wild rice, a variety of meats and eggs. Also on display were wool products. The promotion also featured a slide show created by Monica King and Audrey Kuzyk, district home economists in St. Paul and Smoky Lake. The slides chronicled the adventures of Peggy the pig looking for tastier times. Her journey included stops at the canola crushing plant at Wainwright, a honey farm near St. Paul and a homebased waterproof outerwear manufacturer near Marwayne. Zawadiuk says the promotion made community leaders, especially agriculture service board members, more aware of Alberta's diverse agricultural industry. She said comments at the promotion indicated that some individuals weren't aware of the processors.

LOSING TO WIN

If the holidays brought calorie overloads Alberta Agriculture has a publication to help you battle the bulge. "Losing to Win" is a 21-page booklet designed for safe and effective weight management. The booklet is based on Canada's Food Guide and provides a nutritionally sound action plan for weight control. Food lists, in appropriate portion sizes, are provided for each food group. Menu planning with a daily menu plan master sheet is included. Besides advice on nutrition, the booklet also has meal planning and shopping tips as well as how to eat when eating out. "Losing to Win" is available through Alberta Agriculture's Publication Office. Ask for Homedex 1113-13-1 by writing the publications office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

(Cont'd)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE NEARS FOR PROVINCIAL DAIRY CONVENTION

Convention registration packages for the provincial dairy convention will be available until January 15. The 81st annual Alberta Dairymen's Association provincial dairy convention and 68th annual meeting will be held in Calgary February 6 through 8. The convention is organized around the theme of "fresh perspectives on themes past". Keynote speakers will discuss consumer perceptions and marketing trends, heart disease and dairy products, and "horse sense: a liniment for panic and chaos". Promotion, production and processing issues are also on the agenda in various conference sessions. Registration and other information is available from Brian Allen of the Dairy Control Board in Airdrie at 948-8529.

UNDERSTANDING THE FORECAST

Many a farmer has glanced at the evening sky and predicted the next day would be a fair one. Weather lore will never die, but people do depend on the weather forecasts they see or read daily. Those forecasts come from a sophisticated mix of technology that is interrupted for the general public. While the daily forecast is usually easy to understand, sometimes the terminology can be confusing. Alberta Agriculture has developed a simple guide to weather information. The four page pamphlet on weather forecasting and terminology provides explanations of terminology and also describes weather warning conditions, how forecasts are made, forecast limitations and interpretation, and how forecast information is disseminated to the public. Copies of "Weather Forecasting and Terminology" are available through Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office. Please quote Agdex 070-1 when asking for the brochure. You can write the office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Elzinga announces new deadline for fertilizer price protection plan

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga has confirmed that the new deadline for submitting applications under the Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan is January 31, 1990.

The Minister stated, "On September 27, 1988, Premier Don Getty and I were pleased to announce a one-year extension to the program. As such, fertilizer purchased and used up to July 31, 1989 is eligible and producers have until January 31, 1990 to submit applications."

Prior to the program extension producers had until January 31, 1989 to submit applications. With the one-year program extension, the deadline is now January 31, 1990.

Mr. Elzinga said, "I want to ensure that farmers are not confused by the old application deadline. The government extended the program for the benefit of our producers and the deadline of January 31, 1990 under the extended program will allow farmers every opportunity to benefit from this reduction in input costs."

Under the plan, which was implemented in 1985, producers are eligible to receive a grant calculated on the basis of $50 per tonne of actual nitrogen and $25 per tonne of actual phosphate used. Only fertilizer used on farm land in Alberta is eligible. Eligible applicants include individuals, corporations, partnerships and other organizations farming land, owned, leased or rented for the purpose of crop or forage production. Only one claim for the same fertilizer can be submitted, however, applicants can submit more than one application as fertilizer is purchased and used.

Mr. Elzinga stated, "The program has proven to be very effective in reducing the costs of fertilizer applications. Since the program started, over $68 million has been rebated directly to Alberta producers involved in crop and forage production. This has been welcomed assistance, especially in view of the tight profit margins being experienced over the past few years."

(Cont'd)

Elzinga announces new deadline for farm fertilizer plan (cont'd)

New application forms have been developed to claim on fertilizer purchased and used between the period of August 1, 1988 and July 31, 1989. Producers should apply using the old form for pre-August 1, 1988 purchases and the new forms for purchases made during the extended program period.

For further information on the program, or to obtain application forms, producers should contact their local district agriculture office.

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# Farm income up in 1988

Provincial farm income was greater in 1988 than in 1987 according to Statistics Canada who pegged total realized net income at an estimated $1.056 billion last year.

Total realized net income is the income available to pay down principal on debt, for personal consumption and for investment, savings and income tax. The 1988 estimate is almost 50 per cent higher than the 1987 total of $709 million.

Continued strength in the beef sector, price recovery in grains and healthy government program payments all contributed to the increase says Alberta Agriculture's Bill Schissel.

Schissel, a senior agriculture statistician, says payments from the Western Grain Stabilization Act (WGSA) and the Special Canadian Grains Program (SCGP) and various other programs made up approximately 16 per cent of the total farm cash receipts in 1988. Alberta government transfers from the Crow Benefit Offset program, the Alberta Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance and other input reduction programs reduced farm expenses by nine per cent, he says.

Although the 1988 estimate is a substantial increase over 1987, when adjusted for inflation it is at about the same level as 1981 and still well below income levels of 1974 and 1975 says Schissel.

Total farm cash receipts for last year are estimated at $4.383 million or 10 per cent above the 1987 level. Total operating expenses were two per cent higher in 1988 at $2.739 billion. With depreciation costs added total farm operating expenses were $3.356 billion last year.

Schissel says Statistics Canada isn't predicting the same positive trend for 1989. The federal agency projects farm income levels will decrease as payments for the WGSA and SCGP taper off.

(Cont'd)

Farm income up in 1988 (cont'd)

"A higher portion of crop receipts will be coming from the marketplace in 1989. This year farm income will depend largely on the amount of grains and oilseeds a producer has available for delivery," he says.

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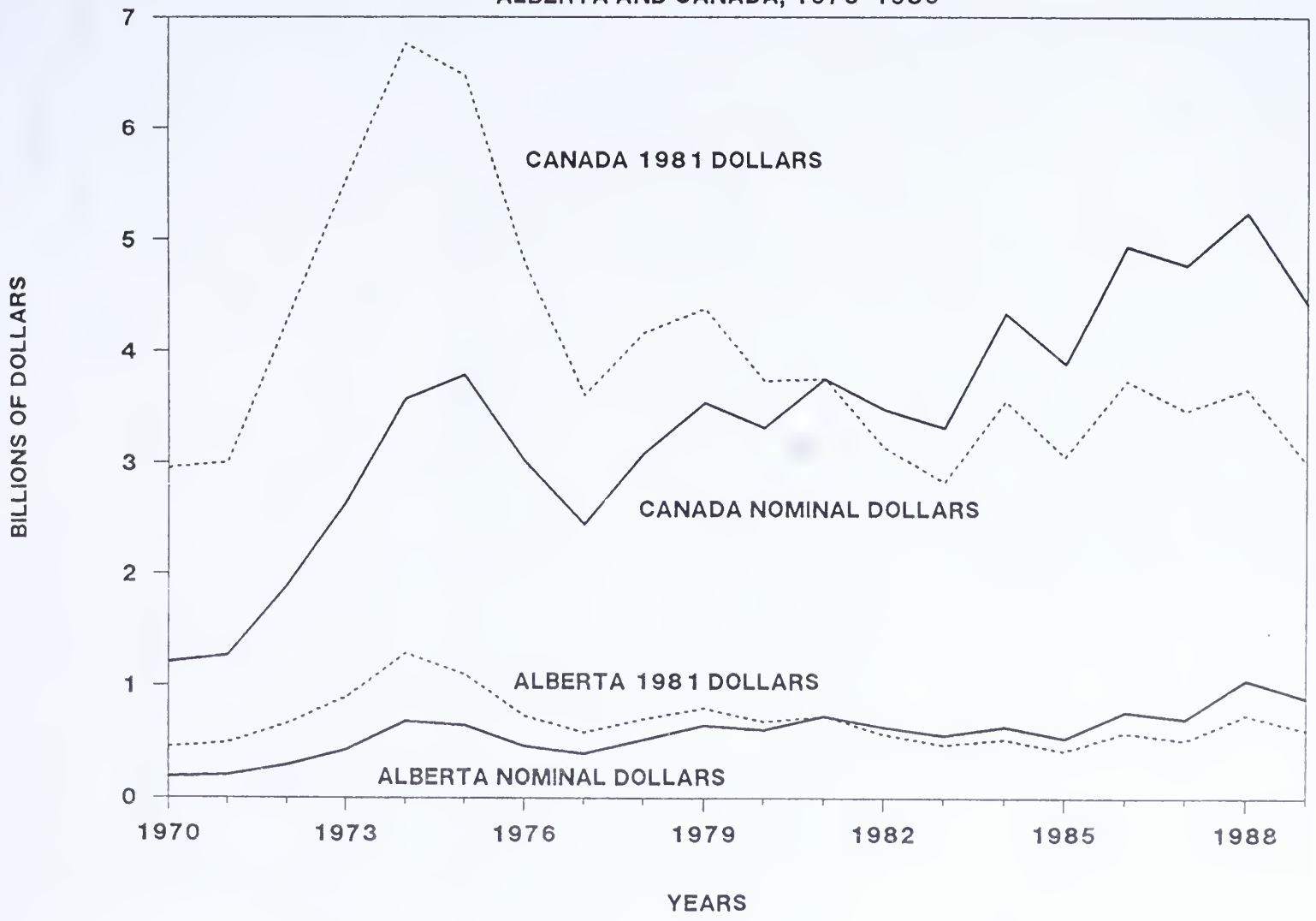
AGRI-NEWS
Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch
Phone: (403) 427-2121

# NET FARM INCOME

## ALBERTA AND CANADA, 1970-1989




Alberta
AGRICULTURE
STATISTICS BRANCH

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

Room for research in new research unit

Charts and papers are in an orderly scatter across one of the data analysis stations in Alberta Agriculture's new research unit.

For Dr. Nick Nation the area has given him the space for a research project away from his office where the project isn't lost in or interrupted by day-to-day office work.

Nation says his spot in the research unit combats some of the problems agriculturists in the department face when working on a research project. "There's no room for a longer term project in your office where you do your daily work. Here you are away from office interruptions and you don't have to disturb your project by finding another place for it when you have to deal with your other work."

Nation's retrospective study of alsike clover poisoning in horses over the last 15 years is one of three projects currently using the facilities of the research unit in O.S. Longman Building. The location is on the same grounds as Alberta Agriculture headquarters with easy access to the University of Alberta campus and farm and other laboratory facilities on-site.

The research unit was designed to encourage interdisciplinary agricultural research by providing work space for short-term applied projects says the research unit's co-ordinator Murray Kennedy. Kennedy, a lab scientist with the animal health division, is also a member of the research unit's advisory committee.

The research unit can accommodate several research teams and requires that at least one team member be an Alberta Agriculture staff member. Each research team has to bring its own funding, personnel and special equipment to the unit. The unit provides space and basic equipment.

(Cont'd)

Kennedy says the unit isn't an extension of existing research facilities, although projects could be co-ordinated with any of Alberta Agriculture's research centres. "It's more of a place for someone like a regional specialist who needs a facility for a short term project and doesn't have a place to headquarter the research," he says.

The research unit offers the research teams basic facilities. It has three labs--soil, plant and tissue. All are multi-purpose, says Kennedy, and can be used for any of the three functions. The labs all have basic equipment of water, air, gas and fume hoods. Kennedy says it's hoped that some major equipment, for example an autoclave, can be added in time.

An eight station data analysis area has a three year plan for developing a computer system for all the stations. Kennedy says the future might also hold a desk top publishing system. The research unit also has a reception area, conference room and audio-visual room.

Research assistant Marie Carmen examines slides demonstrating egg fertility.

The research unit concept was conceived in 1982, says Kennedy and planning all came together in 1988. Final renovations to the area that was once a Public Works workshop in the O.S. Longman building were completed in September. Guidelines for use of the unit were also established.

"The projects were waiting for the facility, " says Kennedy, "And the three projects moved in in November."

(Cont'd)

Room for research in new research unit (cont'd)

Besides Nation's alsike clover poisoning project, there are two other research projects currently underway at the research unit. One is examining fur defects in ranched minks and the other, egg fertility.

The diversity of these initial projects indicates the range of research that could be conducted in the future at the unit says Kennedy. All projects have to emphasize applied agricultural research. They should be practical and yield results easily transferable to the agricultural and food industries, he says.

Projects have to be at least one month long and less than a year. Kennedy says probably they will average between three and six months.

Applications to use the research unit are reviewed by the unit's advisory committee. Animal health, animal industry, plant industry and research and system development divisions are all represented on the committee.

How the research unit is developed will depend on the research teams that take advantage of the facility says Kennedy. "If 95 per cent of the people who come here want data analysis then resources will flow there. Development will depend on the wants and needs coming to us."

Kennedy says he hopes to have a full house in the unit by 1990 as department staff and others become aware of the unit's potential for them. "We'd like to see a nice mixture of disciplines in the research unit. The more there are, the more exciting it will be."

The unit had an open house for department staff just prior to Christmas and Kennedy says planning is in the works for an open house for the public, universities and private industry early in the new year.

Enquiries about applications can be directed in writing to Dr. Murray Kennedy, Research Unit Co-ordinator, 0. S. Longman Building, 6909-116 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 4P2 or by calling him at 436-8902.

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Contact: Murray Kennedy
436-8902

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

# 4-H Hall of Fame inducts two new members

Four decades of service to Alberta youth and the 4-H movement was recognized and celebrated with the induction of the two newest members into Alberta's 4-H Hall of Fame.

Georgina Taylor and Harold Anderson were officially inducted into the Hall of Fame at the 47th annual 4-H leaders' conference in Red Deer on January 14. They are the 25th and 26th members of the provincial 4-H Hall of Fame.

Taylor, of Chauvin, is from a very involved 4-H family. In 1988, together with her husband Harold and son John, the Taylor family had completed over 50 years of 4-H club leadership.

On her own, Taylor has been leader or assistant leader of the Lloydminster Silver Spurs, Battle River Equestrian and the Chauvin Multi clubs over her 17 years of 4-H leadership.

GEORGINA TAYLOR

She has also been involved on Vermilion River and Wainwright district, North East regional and Alberta 4-H councils. As an always willing volunteer Taylor served on a number of committees including fund raising, finance, exchanges, show guidelines and beef and light horse project book revision. She has been a member of the Alberta 4-Council since 1984 and served as council treasurer for two years.

Taylor was an active supporter of the Albera 4-H Centre's "Dimes for Dorms" and "Bucks for Bunks" fundraising campaigns.

Her 4-H activities are part of a very busy schedule of community and business organizations. Her involvement with youth is also evident in her support of student sports, youth camps and the local gymkana club.

(Cont'd)

4-H Hall of Fame inducts two new members (cont'd)

Taylor also has long time associations with the Chauvin Agricultural Society, Board of Trade and Tourism, and the Home and School Association. She has served as secretary and treasurer of the Pelican Women of Unifarm during her 15 years as part of that organization.

Through the guest ranch they operate on their farm, the Taylor's have become involved with Alberta's tourism industry. Georgina joined the Battle River Tourism Association in 1971 and has served as vice-president, show councillor and brochure committee member. She is also a founding member of both the Alberta and Canadian Country Vacations Associations and has served in a number of executive positions with both organizations.

During his 23-year involvement with 4-H, Harold Anderson has provided support and leadership to every level of the 4-H organization. He has been particularly involved with public speaking and developing the Alberta 4-H Centre.

For 16 years Anderson, of Delacour, was involved with the Balzac Field Crops, the Irricana Beef and Keoma Small Engine clubs.

While a member of the Rockyview District council he helped to organize district participation in the first highway cleanup and 4-H exchanges in the Calgary area.

HAROLD ANDERSON

From 1974 to 1976 Anderson was president of the Calgary Regional Council and assisted with the organization of the first "4-H on Parade". In 1983, he was the first recipient of the Calgary 4-H region recognition award.

For nine years, from 1975 to 1986, Anderson was a member of the Alberta 4-H Council and was president for two of those years.

(Cont'd)

4-H Hall of Fame inducts two new members (cont'd)

During his tenure on provincial council he worked with the 4-H Foundation in planning and promoting the Alberta 4-H Centre at Battle Lake. Anderson attended many club, district and regional meetings to explain the plans for the centre. He also served eight years as a member of the 4-H Foundation of Alberta.

His work with 4-H is just one part of his community service. Anderson's other involvement's include the Rockyview Municipal Planning Board, the Home and School association and local recreation board. He has been active in the Masonic Lodge for over 30 years. He also has administered the Gordon Anderson memorial scholarship since its inception in 1975 and has been a member of the committee administering the Fennessey memorial scholarship since 1960.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2451

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

# 1000 kernel weight useful crop management tool

Scientists have been giving farmers 1000 kernel weight information but not ways to utilize the useful tool for seeding and harvest crop management says an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist.

To fill that gap, Neil Miller, the DA in Lacombe, has developed simple formulas for 1000 kernel weight information that can be used by farmers to determine seeding rates as well as other crop management information.

"The 1000 kernel weight is a valuable tool that needs to be used to ensure plant densities that will produce a maximum economic crop return," says Miller. He is promoting the concept and his formulas in a booklet, "Using the 1000 kernel weight in crop management from seeding time to harvest".

Miller says expected plant populations should form the basis of seeding rates. "Scientists tell us that for most common cereals a plant density of 24 plants per square foot is desirable under moist conditions. Semi-dwarf varieties should have a density of between 24 and 30 and for peas the planting density should be seven plants per square foot. Under drought conditions, lower seeding rates are recommended.

"The challenge for farmers is to achieve these plant densities when seed sizes and germination rates vary greatly," he adds.

While many variety comparisons now list 1000 kernel weights as well as yield information that can be used to determine seeding rates, Miller says, a better way is for a producer to count out 1000 seeds of his own grain, weigh them and use that information.

"It's to a producer's advantage to use his own seed's 1000 kernel weight to determine optimum seeding rates. It can save many dollars, especially in large seeder crops such as peas," he says.

The seeding rate formula, which is explained in detail in the booklet, involves multiplying the desired plant population by the 1000 kernel weight and dividing by 10, then dividing that total by the percentage of expected seed survival.

(Cont'd)

1000 kernel weight useful crop management tool (cont'd)

For example, if a producer wanted to determine a seeding rate for Klondike barley with a 1000 kernel weight of 35 grams he would first multiply the 35 by the desired plant population per square foot of 24 and then divide by 10. He would further divide the total by the expected seed survival rate of 0.9 (90 per cent) and obtain a seeding rate of 93 1/3 pounds per acre.

Miller says this figure must not be converted to a bushels per acre seeding rate. "Because bushel weights vary, this introduces a meaningless variable," he says.

The booklet also has formulas for seed drill calibration, crop yield estimates and shattering and combine losses. The booklet also has average 1000 kernel weights for various crop types and varieties by region. Formulas are provided both in imperial and metric measurements.

To obtain a copy of the booklet contact Neil Miller at Bag Service 47, Lacombe, Alberta T0C 1S0 or call 782-3301.

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Contact: Neil Miller
782-3301

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

# Land clearing rates survey available

Results of the 1988 survey of custom land clearing and breaking rates have been released by the farm business management branch of Alberta Agriculture.

"Rates do vary reflecting economic and land conditions," says Garth Nickorick. "Such things as terrain, type of bush, distance, size of job, capacity of machinery do affect the actual rate for a particular job."

The survey, conducted in November, shows slight differences in rates by region. In the Calgary area to the Montana border brushing and piling charges range from $70 to $80 per hour for work performed by crawler tractors such as D7 Cats with a dozer blade.

For central Alberta--Red Deer, Barrhead, and Cold Lake area--rates surveyed indicate $70 to $80 per hour for D7 machinery and $75 to $90 per hour for D8 machinery.

Northern Alberta--Peace River and Grande Prairie areas--rates were $85 to $100 for D8, D9 type machinery for brushing and piling operations.

In addition to brushing and piling, the machinery is charged out at the same rates for most secondary clearing and breaking operations, says Nickorick.

"Dugout construction charges are commonly $60 to $90 per hour for crawler tractors," says Nickorick. "Rates per volume of dirt moved are 65 cents to $1 per cubic metre."

For more information and a copy of the survey, contact Garth Nickorick at the Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

Success in marriage is more than just survival

Stresses arising from economic uncertainty, the way we see ourselves and the way we think others see us profoundly affects marriage and family says an Edmonton family therapist.

"A successful marriage can be more than just survival," says Peter Dyck who is among the speakers at Alberta Agriculture's upcoming Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge. His theme is "the old values of family life, loyalty, love and respect can survive in the midst of many changes".

His wife, Mary, will be joining him in addressing some of the real issues than many marriage partners are struggling with today. These include: each person's sense of who they are; the farm wife's struggle with her own unique personal identity separate from being wife to her husband; couples recognizing loneliness in one another; and, revitalizing communication between marriage partners. The Dycks will suggest ways that problems can be changed into useful "tools" in marriage relationships.

The Dycks bring background and experience for understanding both family and the farming community. He was born and raised on a Manitoba family farm and is currently an Anglican minister in the Edmonton Diocese as well as a practicing family therapist. The Dycks have two children and two grandchildren.

Success in marriage is among more than 20 plenary and concurrent sessions scheduled for the MATFP conference. Registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district agriculture offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, the UFA and the Farm Business Management Branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

January 16, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

## ALBERTA BERRY PRODUCTION COURSES

Commercial berry producers and potential berry growers can take advantage of production courses for strawberries, raspberries and saskatoons that will be offered over the next month. Alberta Agriculture in co-operation with the Alberta Market Gardeners Association, is again sponsoring the courses. Each course is in-depth and detailed and is not intended for the home gardener. Topics covered include site selection and equipment, variety recommendations, production and management practices, weed and disease control, straw mulcher construction, pricing and marketing. A nominal feed will be charged for the courses and can be paid at the door. The location and type of the courses are as follows: January 23, Taber, town administration building, strawberries; January 25, Grand Prairie, Golden Inn, strawberries/raspberries/saskatoons; January 31, Edmonton, Capilano Motor Inn, strawberries; February 1, Edmonton, Capilano Motor Inn, raspberries/ saskatoons; February 7, Red Deer, Capri Centre, strawberries; and, Red Deer, Capri Centre, raspberries/saskatoons. More information can be obtained by contacting Lloyd Hausher, fruit crops specialist, at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticulture Research Center in Brooks at 362-3391.

## MANAGING UNCERTAINTY AT WESTERN BARLEY GROWERS CONFERENCE

Agriculture always has an edge of uncertainty and managing that uncertainty is the theme for the 12th annual Western Barley Growers Association convention and trade fair February 22 through 24 at the Kananaskis Lodge. Speakers will address topics that include stress, managing farm financial risk and marketing management. Participants will also have ample opportunity to look through the associated trade fair. Pre-registration forms received prior to February 8 will qualify for an early bird draw that takes the winner to Las Vegas with $250 U.S. in spending money. For registration and other information contact Anne Schneider in Calgary at 291-3630.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT OLDS COLLEGE

Formal celebrations of Olds College 75th anniversary take place January 28 with a gala evening. Dinner and dancing will be highlighted with a champagne toast to the college. As well, prominent local artist Patrick Cox will unveil the commemorative artwork commissioned by the college in honor of the 75th anniversary. The evening to remember is the highlight of 75th anniversary celebrations that have been taking place throughout the 1988-89 academic year. Tickets are $25. For more information contact Moni Hari at 556-4611.

ALBERTA PORK PRODUCERS CHANGE NAME

The Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board has changed its name to the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation. The organization says its name change was promoted by a common misunderstanding that the pork producer agency was a government body. The producer group was also concerned with what it describes as an "equally common belief" it administered production quotas and set prices for hogs. The name change resulted from a district resolution calling for a name change at the delegate/director meeting of April 1988. The organization says the change of name will be accomplished without cost to pork producers by gradually replacing printed materials as they are used.

PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE

Trends and challenges for the future are up for discussion at the third annual "Passport to the Future" conference February 6 in Vulcan. Vancouver Futurist Frank Ogden will make two presentations to conference participants dealing with the opportunities of the information age and the individual's place in the third millennium. Other speakers will address the classroom of the year 2000, new trends in food science, and motivating community and organizations. The registration deadline is January 26. The conference is co-ordinated by Alberta Agriculture, the County of Vulcan board of education, the Further Education Council and the Vulcan Chamber of Commerce. For more information contact Kathy Lowther, Vulcan district home economist at 485-2236.

# AGRI-NEWS

FEB - 7 1989

January 23, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

Cripps says emphasis necessary on value adding and marketing

Value adding to agricultural products and marketing Alberta's agriculture products are exciting challenges in diversifying the province's agriculture industry says Alberta's Associate Minister of Agriculture.

Shirley Cripps told the annual Unifarm convention in Edmonton that a thriving agriculture community needs to continue to add value to its products to prosper.

"The government has been placing more emphasis on development of secondary agriculture industries," she says, "And so has the private sector. I believe the agricultural community has recognized that there's a partnership there. It's not just growing and producing, but also value enhancing and getting the product to market that's important."

Mrs. Cripps also told convention delegates they shouldn't underestimate the impact of major events like the Calgary Olympics in opening doors for Alberta products. "The Olympics have had a major marketing impact," she says. She says in her trade mission travel since the February Olympics she hasn't had to explain where Alberta was.

The trade agreement with the United States and trade missions to the Pacific Rim are the two of the most exciting market potentials she says.

Oats are one product she says that will benefit from the trade agreement. A trade mission to Houston in 1988 convinced her inroads could be made in the American oat market. She says Alberta has a superior product to offer, for example, to Texas with the largest horse population in the United States.

Last November Mrs. Cripps led a trade mission to the Pacific Rim stopping in China, South Korea and Japan. She says she is enthusiastic about Alberta's ability to produce, market and sell agricultural technology and products in those countries.

(Cont'd)

Cripps says emphasis necessary on value adding and marketing (cont'd)

Consumers in the buoyant Japanese and Korean economies are looking for more product variety at a cheaper price, she says. Their governments are looking at liberalizing trade.

Japan currently imports $40 billion worth of food annually. Canadian food exports there total $2 billion and Alberta's share is $300 million. Mrs. Cripps says our total can be higher but selling to the Japanese will demand consideration of a very precise market and maintaining the quality of our exports.

The associate minister also discussed the current state of the agriculture industry underscoring the importance of having a income safety net. "Farmers have said time and time again, that they don't want ad hoc programs, so the safety net is essential." She outlined provincial government commitments to that safety net including input cost reduction programs such as the Farm Credit Stability Program and the farm fuel allowance.

She also discussed the conference theme of soil conservation. "We have to be stewards of our soil to leave that heritage better than we found it," she says.

Mrs. Cripps portfolio includes responsibility for Alberta's crop insurance system. The system was reviewed through 1986 and '87 and currently negotiations are underway with the federal government to implement some of the recommendations from that review. She says producers could see some of those changes by 1990.

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January 23, 1989
For immediate release

# Keeping soil's principal

Soil is like a bank account, you have to maintain the principal if you want to keep getting interest says the head of Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch.

John Hermans was speaking as part of a three member panel to delegates at the annual Unifarm Convention in Edmonton. Panelists included Dr. Harry Hill, current executive director of the national soil conservation program, and Hanna area producer Norman Storch.

Hermans outlined the facets of the soil degradation problem and also some of the current approaches to dealing with the problem. Soil degradation includes loss of organic matter, wind erosion, water erosion and dryland salinity.

While these problems aren't new or specific only to Alberta, attention has been focused on them more in the last decade than since the 1930s. The panel told delegates that focus is a combination of both recent weather phenomenon and gradual awareness of consequences of accepted farming practices.

"Soil is at risk and many soils are running out of time. All facets of agriculture depend on soil. Now is the time to act to stop soil degradation," says Hermans.

Today's problems are much the same as those associated with the dry and dusty years of the great depression, and the solutions are also similar.

One of the first hurdles to overcome in fighting soil degradation is the "blackfallow is beautiful" concept. Reduced tillage, minimum tillage, zero tillage, legume plowdowns, flex cropping, using a noble blade and continuous cropping were all advocated as potential solutions depending on the situations of individual producers.

(Cont'd)

Keeping soil's principal(cont'd)

Across the Prairies soil organic matter has been depleted as much as 50 per cent in many soils since the land was first broken and used for cultivation. This organic matter is critical for its nutrients, providing a good seed bed and holding moisture. Returning residues to soil is one of the easiest ways to maintain the organic matter, he says, and yet some farmers still burn off stubble.

While the severity of wind erosion is greater in southern Alberta, it is not confined to that part of the province. A May 23, 1988 dust storm swirled dust clouds for 100 miles around Edmonton darkening skies, disrupting airshows and blowing away acres of precious topsoil.

Like other soil degradation problems, wind erosion can be lessened in a variety of ways. Those methods need to be communicated to farmers who have the responsibility of conserving their soil. That responsibility is legislated in the Soil Conservation Act. Hermans says while the legislation is an important framework for soil conservation, just using enforcement isn't the best way to get long term results.

He advocates awareness programs--like National Soil Conservation week April 10 through 16 this year--and tours of demonstration projects. "Working with farmers will get the best results. It's an issue they already feel strongly about, we saw that in a survey we did," he says.

Hermans says education in schools is also critical to a societal approach to soil conservation. "We need to teach everyone the value of soil, the resource, in sustaining the long term productivity of agriculture in Alberta."

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Contact: John Hermans
422-4385

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

Will this year's weather be like '88s?

Late December 1988 and early January 1989 snowfalls were a welcome sight to most Alberta farmers, especially in southern parts of the province, reports a weather resource specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

The precipitation received to date in 1989 has been encouraging and it has revived hopes that normal or above normal precipitation will fall this year. Hope is especially high in southern Alberta says Peter Dzikowski.

"Monthly precipitation totals were well below normal for four of the first five months of 1988," he says. Last year's dry spring followed a mild dry winter and caused delays in seeding as farmers waited for moisture before seeding their crops. Total rainfall in April and May was only 20 per cent of normal in southern and southcentral Alberta.

Showers during the first week of June got crops started in central and northern areas. The next week brought more widespread rain getting crops started in eastern and southern Alberta and providing good moisture in central and northern Alberta.

June and July rains dispelled drought conditions in central and northern areas, but, rain was inadequate to meet crop and water supply needs in the east central and southern parts of Alberta which experienced drought conditions most of the summer, Dzikowski says.

Precipitation during the fall of 1988 was generally below normal raising concern about another dry winter, he says. The 1988 average annual total precipitation for 18 weather stations in Alberta was 439.1 mm, very close to the long term average of 438.8 mm. Dzikowski says this statistic hides the fact that southern Alberta was very dry, central Alberta was near average and the Peace region was wetter than normal. He adds the precipitation value is consistent with the fact that Alberta's 1988 crop production was above the five year average.

(Cont'd)

Will this year's weather be like '88s? (cont'd)

The range of annual total precipitation was from a low of 206 mm at Medicine Hat (41 per cent below normal) to a high of 590.6 mm at Whitecourt (7 per cent above normal). Peace River reported 454.5 mm of rainfall which is 21 per cent above normal.

Average annual temperatures for 1988 were about 2°C above normal across the province. Whitecourt's average temperature of 4.3°C was 3.2 degrees above normal and Peace River's 2.9 °C average was 1.3 degrees higher than normal.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

# Climate should have impact on decisions

Being prepared with information related to climate and its variability can help you make agricultural and water management decisions says an Alberta Agriculture weather resource specialist.

Peter Dzikowski is one of two keynote speakers who will lead off the this year's Wetlands, Wildlife and Agriculture conference February 15 through 17 in Edmonton.

Dzikowski will address climate change and climate issues related to wetlands and agriculture along with how to include climate information in decision making. He says information available on climate variability is an important planning tool which should be used. "We know what it has been so we can plan for climate variation, but we can't plan for climate change yet," he says.

Recent past climate data gives us a good idea about the range of climate variations that can be expected. He says he will also answer questions about climate change. "I'll try to separate fact from speculation about climate change by answering whether climate change is here and whether it will happen," he says.

He will also look at areas where climate information may be relevant to decision making, but isn't used. One reason people don't use that kind of information, is that it may not be presented in a useful form.

The conference will focus on solutions to problems discussed at the 1988 conference. Participants will look at potential solutions to issues raised by conflicting views of wetlands management. Conference sessions will spotlight successful projects that integrated wetlands management with agricultural and wildlife needs. Discussions will be specific to northern, central and southern regions of the province.

The conference is open to anyone interested in agricultural wetlands including landowners, local authorities, consultants, researchers, nongovernment organizations and government officials.

(Cont'd)

Climate should have impact on decisions (cont'd)

The conference is sponsored by the Alberta chapters of the Canadian Water Resources Association and Soil and Water Conservation Society with support from a number of government departments including Alberta Agriculture.

Registration and other information is available from Lynne Kemper, Alberta Water Resources Commission, 422-4232 or Anne Naeth at 432-5338 or 432-2771.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

Perspectives on farm labor seminar

Farm labor from the perspectives of both employer and employee is in the spotlight at a day long seminar in Eckville on February 3.

Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and Olds College, the seminar will examine many farm labor concerns through a panel of employers, employees and spouses. The panel will be moderated by Russell Ayers-Berry, a farm labor consultant with Lambourne Agricultural Consulting of Eckville.

Rocky Mountain House district agriculturist Ken Ziegler says the "Partners in Growth" seminar will look at key issues related to farm labor. He says the value of dependable and conscientious help is an important asset to any farm.

"While the 'people' aspects of farming has always been an important feature for those farms that hire employees, farm employment has tended to be short term. That raises questions of why farm employment hasn't lent itself to long term careers and what the agricultural community can do to improve the many good features of farm labor," Ziegler says.

Moderator Ayers-Berry will combine labor theory with on farm experiences in presenting a practical approach to farm labor relations. Seminar participants will discuss communication, motivation, needs, benefits, compensation and productivity bonuses. The panel and participants will work through these important features of a healthy working climate through active audience participation.

Registration and other information about the seminar is available from district Alberta Agriculture offices in Rocky Mountain House (845-8200), Lacombe (782-3301), Innisfail (227-6565), and Red Deer (340-5364) or Olds College (556-8344).

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Contact: Ken Zeigler
845-8200

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

# Managing the farm through innovation

Innovations in farm management will be the thrust of Marty Thorton's presentation to this year's Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference.

Thorton is one of more than 20 speakers who are on the line up for the 1989 MATFP conference March 5 through 9 at the Kananaskis Lodge. He has had 11 years of management experience overseeing more than 60,000 acres for the People Banks of Bloomington, Illinois. Currently Thorton is vice-president and senior farm manager of the bank and was recently honored as "eastern region farm manager of the year" by the Ciba-Grey Corporation.

"Mr. Thorton's way of looking at managing the farm makes listeners stop and think, 'Hey, I've never thought things that way'," says Alex Ostapiuk, of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Thorton's philosophy on successful farm management focuses on farmers knowing who they are, where they are and where they are going. He says he believes in not being complacent and encourages his employees to challenge old ideas that may need rethinking. This includes a willingness to remain open to new ideas, try them and then change directions to quickly adopt the new idea or technique that gives a competitive edge.

Production, says Thorton, is just as important as marketing. Today shooting for maximum economic yield is the name of the game so economics have to control resource allocation. This puts Thorton constantly on the lookout for ways to save money without sacrificing quality.

While many people think of the successful business person as the one who came up with a revolutionary idea, Thorton says success can be achieved through fine-tuning rather than overhauling. Successful farmers are risk managers not risk takers, he says.

(Cont'd)

Managing the farm through innovation (cont'd)

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, the UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

# Tree pruning courses coming soon

Tree pruning techniques and elements of tree care are the focus of two Alberta Agriculture courses in March.

The two day pruning courses will be offered in both Edmonton and Brooks. The Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in northeast Edmonton will run the course March 7 and 8. The Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks offers the course March 14 and 15.

Hannah Mathers, nursery crops specialist in Brooks, says while the course is designed for people who work with trees on their jobs, it is also open to anyone interested in learning about tree maintenance and beautification.

"The program can provide the how to for city park workers in pruning boulevards and along highways," she says, "But the course is general enough to also be useful for someone who wants to know how to prune their own trees."

Six topics are looked at over the two days, starting with plant structure and tree growth. Plant hardiness is also examined along with insect and disease control related to pruning.

Pruning of three types of trees--fruit trees and shrubs, ornamental shrubs and shade trees--are featured. Mathers says tools as well as proper techniques are discussed during the course. Participants will also get a chance to practice the pruning skills they learn.

Registration is limited to 30 people per course and pre-registration is required. The pre-registration deadline for both courses is February 24. Registration forms are available through the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center, Bag Service 200, Brooks, T0J 0J0, or the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticultural Centre at R.R. 6, Edmonton, T5B 4K3.

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Contact: Hannah Mathers
362-3391

Brendan Casement
472-6043

January 23, 1989
For immediate release

# Agri-News Briefs

## GROW WITH CANOLA

Alberta canola growers have a full agenda at their annual convention January 25 through 27 in Edmonton. Among topics for discussion are canola and free trade, tariff consultations, plant breeder rights, potentials for winter canola in Western Canada, a market outlook and changes to the producer car system. Alberta Canola Growers Association delegates will also get a description of the provincial government's recently announced blackleg of canola control program. More information about the convention is available from the association office at 451-0844.

## CENTRAL ALBERTA GROW SHOW

Alberta Agriculture specialists will be sharing their expertise at the 1989 edition of the Grow Show January 25 through 27 at Westerner Park in Red Deer. Production, marketing and feeding crops in central Alberta is the general theme of their presentations. Errol Anderson, a regional marketing specialist based in Airdrie, will have a feed grain outlook on day two of the show. Ruminant nutritionist Rick Corbett will speak about pulse proteins for ruminant animals. Using pulse crops in swine rations will be addressed by monogastric nutritionist Sam Jaikaran. Both Corbett and Jaikaran are based in the soil and feed testing laboratory in Edmonton and will speaking during day three of the show. Also speaking during the last day of the show is Bob Park. Park is the supervisor of special crops at Lacombe's field crops branch. He will take the pulse of "pulse" crops. Anderson can be reached at 948-8536, Corbett and Jaikaran at 436-9150 and Park at 782-4641 (Edmonton direct line 423-4214).

(Cont'd)

FOOD MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES IN U.S. DISCUSSED

Canadian food marketing opportunities in the United States will be discussed at the ninth annual Western Canadian economic conference on the food industry February 12 and 13 in Edmonton. The Canada-U.S. trade agreement, export readiness, transportation's impact on the food industry, why Americans buy Canadian and technology and marketing are among topics to be addressed by the speakers. The Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) is the conference co-ordinator and information on the conference is available by contacting the REDA office at 451-5959.

BARLEY AWARENESS DAYS

The Western Barley Growers Association is sponsoring a series of awareness days in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The first seminar is today in Vulcan with other sessions scheduled for Westlock on January 31, Viking on February 1 and Stettler February 2. Bringing farmers up to date with the latest barley production and marketing information is the objective of the awareness seminars. Transportation concerns and malting barley opportunities are two of the highlighted topics. Saskatchewan seminars are tentatively planned for March. For more information on the seminars contact Ed Armstrong (Westlock seminar) at 954-3769, Richard Norstrom (Viking seminar) at 336-4875, Lee Erickson (Stettler seminar) at 883-2338 or Glen Goertzen (Stettler seminar) at 742-4263.

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# AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
FEB 21

January 30, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

# Pursing cattle marketing alternatives

Giving producers a better understanding of how prices are set and the risks and benefits of marketing alternatives is the objective of a new cattle market simulation developed by Alberta Agriculture.

One of Cattlesim's four designers is Errol Anderson, a regional marketing specialist based in Airdrie. Anderson says Cattlesim should make producers more aware of marketing alternatives as well as give them the ability to choose between those alternatives.

Simulation participants have 10 turns to make decisions on two calf crops through a time frame of two and a half years. Cattlesim provides players with several delivery options. Feeder cattle can be sent to three different auction markets or be sold privately. Fat animals can be sold live or on the rail in Canada or the U.S. or be a contract sale.

Cattlesim has several market pricing options. Participants can choose forward contracts agreeing to deliver and receive payment at a specified future date. Quantity, price, time and place of delivery are set in the contract. There are two types of contracts to choose from in Cattlesim: a 90 day Canadian one or selling 12 months ahead to the U.S.

Participants can also hedge on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. Hedging involves buying and selling on the futures market to protect against the fluctuations of cash selling in the marketplace.

The third alternative is using the options market of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, which involves purchasing an option on a futures contract at a specific price.

Complete background information is included on how the delivery and pricing options work so the participants can make informed choices about the alternatives they have in the simulation exercise.

(Cont'd)

Pursing cattle marketing alternatives (cont'd)

Currently Cattlesim is being tried through several Alberta Agriculture district offices. One of the simulations was run through the Olds office.

Olds DA Steve Archibald says he introduced Cattlesim in a one day session with group members taking their first two turns that day. The simulation continued with participants phoning in their transactions to him, the broker. He punched those choices into the computer and printed their transaction results.

Grant Lastiwka, Innisfail DA also recently acted as a Cattlesim broker. He says the simulation has many benefits for the producer participants. "It looks at a lot of the facets of the cattle market and puts emphasis on economic analysis. Farmers can put dollar and cent values on what they do. The costs really hit home."

Anderson says Cattlesim is unique. Research across the U.S. didn't turn up anything like it. He says he hopes that Cattlesim will enjoy the same popular and successful usage as Futuresim. Anderson and Doug Walkey, the regional marketing specialist in Red Deer, developed the grains futures market simulation in 1987.

"Response to Futuresim has been fantastic, it's now being used across Canada," he says. "Through the simulation, whether producers ever go on to use the futures market, they understand how it works--price setting, risks and benefits. That's what we want to do with Cattlesim," he says. He adds many Futuresim participants did go on to try to the futures market.

The design period for Cattlesim started in March 1988 with writing and planning taking place over the following months. There have already been three revisions, but that doesn't worry Anderson. "We've revised Futuresim 11 times. It's not perfect but it does work well. The people who are trying Cattlesim now are working out the kinks and we are making adjustments."

(Cont'd)

Pursing cattle marketing alternatives (cont'd)

Besides Anderson who investigated the American packing market, Cattlesim had three other designers. Walkely was again involved along with Don Milligan, Airdrie regional livestock specialist, and Rimbey DA Ted Ford.

Anyone interested in trying Cattlesim should contact their district Alberta Agriculture office for more information.

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Contact: Errol Anderson
948-8536

Doug Walkey
340-7612

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

Blackleg of canola prevention and control detailed in brochure

Alberta farmers will soon be receiving a brochure in the mail that details prevention and control of virulent blackleg of canola.

The brochure, "Attention canola growers stop blackleg", will likely be mailed in early February. It tells farmers about the disease, how to prevent its spread and how the recently announced testing program works.

In late December Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga announced a seed testing program for canola samples submitted for germination tests. The no-cost-to-producer test is part of a government awareness campaign to stop the spread of the highly infectious fungus that reduces canola (rapeseed) crop yields.

The blackleg test is available at no charge to anyone submitting a sample for a germination test at any recognized testing facility. The test would normally cost between $40 and $45 says Dr. Ieuan Evans, plant pathology supervisor with Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch.

Virulent blackleg of canola was first recorded in Alberta in 1983. The disease has been slowly spreading westward from Saskatchewan into east central Alberta over the last few years.

"While wind will spread the disease locally by carrying spores from field to field, we're particular concerned about disease spreading over longer distances when producers buy, transport and then use infected seed," says Evans.

Currently any seed, pedigreed or commercial, offered for sale must be accompanied by a germination test certificate. Results of a blackleg test will be included with the germination certificate.

"We recommend that anyone who purchases canola seed for 1989 to make sure that it has been tested for the blackleg fungus," he says. Evans adds that even if the test results were negative that all canola should be treated before seeding. "There is still a chance infected seeds could be in a large seed lot. Fungicide seed treatment further minimizes risk of introducing the disease to your land."

(Cont'd)

Blackleg of canola prevention and control detailed in brochure (cont'd)

Recommended fungicides include benomyl, carbathlin and iprodione. They are available under several trade names and are listed in the brochure.

Besides the test and fungicide treatment, the brochure also tells producers about other preventative measures. Proper crop rotation, weed control and control of volunteer canola also are essential.

"Canola should, at a minimum, only be grown on a field once every three years. Blackleg can live on volunteer canola and wild mustards so unless they are controlled even longer crop rotations will be ineffective in controlling blackleg," he says.

If blackleg has already infected a field the producer does have several options to try to control the disease including the preventative measures already described Evans says.

"Canola stubble should be buried as deeply as possible to speed up stubble decomposition and reduce the infestation level. If soil erosion is a problem then stubble should be incorporated just before seeding.

"In the next three seasons the producer should use shallow tillage or direct seeding to avoid bringing infected residue to the surface. It's a good idea to plant non-host crops such as cereals, grasses, alfalfa and clover," he says.

As well, producers shouldn't--if at all possible--seed canola any closer than a half mile away from infested land for three years, should keep infested land totally free of volunteer canola and wild mustards, and above all not use canola harvested from infested land as seed, he says.

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Contact: Ieuan Evans
427-7098

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

# Battling trees along irrigation canals

A seven year monitoring program in the Western Irrigation District (WID) near Strathmore has answered questions about the never ending battle with tree regrowth on canal banks.

Methods and costs related to spraying and rotoblading tree regrowth have been summarized in a report, says Jack Ganesh, evaluation and monitoring engineer with Alberta Agriculture's irrigation branch.

Ganesh says the WID, in comparison to other irrigation districts, probably has the biggest tree problem along its canals. "The problem does exist in other districts and may cause similar concerns. Our report on what the WID did can show other districts solutions that have worked," he says.

Irrigation branch staff monitored five Irrigation Capital Works rehabilitated canals in the WID. The Irrigation Capital Works program is funded through the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund with tree removal as part of the rehabilitation process.

Trees have been removed in the Western Irrigation District canals since 1981. This included removing large trees, cutting down all brush, reshaping canal side slopes and rebuilding canal banks where necessary.

Regrowth problem arise with the moisture in the canals sparking rapid plant growth that can eventually impede the flow of water through the canals. "After only one irrigation season willow and poplar tree regrowth can be rapid, so the district has to follow up the initial removal with a maintenance program along our rehabilitated canals," says WID manager Craig Gordon.

The district has used a combined mowing and spray program to combat the regrowth. Boom mounted rotary mowers are used each season to cut down brush regrowth. Rotoblading is usually done when the canal is dry to prevent the chips from clogging the system during the irrigation season.

(Cont'd)

Battling trees along irrigation canals (cont'd)

This is followed by a spray program using Dycleer 2-4 on the side slopes of the canal after regrowth begins. Dycleer 2-4 is a Dicamba and 2,4-D based herbicide that kills broad leaf vegetation. It usually kills the complete plant, including the roots, but doesn't affect grasses.

Spray applications are repeated for three irrigation seasons. Resprouting usually stops by then, says Gordon. "We feel this procedure is quite effective in controlling tree regrowth."

Ganesh says observations during site visits found that driving banks were well maintained. The opposite bank wasn't as clear. Regrowth in some areas reached between one and two metres. "This happened because the high side of the canal is sometimes inaccessible and can't be rotobladed or sprayed," he says.

Ganesh has advice related to spraying the trees. While trees can be sprayed while water is in the canal, care should be taken to keep the herbicide away from the water. Districts also must have permits from Alberta Environment before they can use spray as a vegetative control along their irrigation canals.

The report on the tree regrowth maintenance program in the WID is available by contacting the irrigation branch in Lethbridge at 381-5869.

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Contact: Jack Ganesh
381-5869

Craig Gordon
WID manager, Strathmore
934-3542

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

Market outlook discussed at Accent '89

Last year will long be remembered as the year of the weather market as last summer's drought made farm prices volatile.

While none of the speakers at the Accent '88 conference predicted the drought, several of them emphasized that a poor crop in any major producing region of the world would have a big impact on prices.

Potential supply and demand developments that will affect farm prices in 1989 will be discussed at the tenth annual Alberta farm outlook conference in Edmonton February 28 and March 1.

The two-day program features both an international and domestic market outlook for this year and beyond. World wheat, international and local feedgrains, quota grains, North American hog, international and Canadian oilseeds, and U.S and Canadian cattle markets will be specifically examined, says David Walker, head of Alberta Agriculture's market analysis branch.

The conference is also being held two weeks earlier than usual says Walker. "By scheduling the conference earlier, we hope to avoid the peak of calving season and be able to have more cattlemen attend."

Walker says a special feature of this year's conference is a pre-conference panel discussion of alternate crops. Panelists include Blair Roth, Alberta Agriculture special crops specialist; Brian Clancy, export grain trader, and Fred Boyce, forage seeds sales manager for United Grain Growers.

The conference is co-sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Agricultural Economics Association. Further conference information is available by contacting the market analysis branch at 427-5387. Conference brochures are also available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

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Contact: David Walker
427-7132

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

# Survival of the family farm

Agriculture's backbone, the family farm, has been recently described as having a pick-up in the yard, a chicken in the pot and a wolf at the door.

Survival of the family farm has become a serious question, one that will be addressed at this year's edition of the Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

Speaking on the controversial topic "Is the family farm a thing of the past", is Gary Comstock, an American professor and author.

Three years ago Comstock organized a conference on family farm survival and followed that with his book "Is There a Moral Obligation to Save the Family Farm?" In the book he summarizes expert points of view covering economics, sociology, ethics, philosophy and theology as well as the personal experiences of farmers.

Some experts predict that American family farms grossing less than $200,000 annually aren't financially viable in the face of the high pressure international marketplace. Comstock also says,"With the U.S. family farm population comprising about one per cent of the American population, and predicted to almost certainly decline further, survival of the family farm may be in jeopardy".

The alternatives become either 50,000 superfarms producing 75 per cent of the U.S. agricultural output or 500,000 family farms, says Comstock. Policy makers will have to make decisions about the direction agriculture will take Comstock says. He says those decisions should be based on more than mere economic efficiency. By considering only economic efficiency, effort, stewardship, fairness, responsibility and cultural identity are left out.

(Cont'd)

Survival of the family farm (cont'd)

For example, he says, family farms may be the best way to conserve soil, water and air. A family farmer who wants to pass his land on to the next generation has more incentive to adapt conservation tillage practices than a corporate manager concerned with profit margins.

Registration forms for MATFP '89 are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

## Editor's Note

The following series of three articles on the second annual Canada Packers Alberta quilt competition can be run together or as a series of articles. Each article can stand alone. Some editing may be required if the stories are published at the same time.

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

Second annual quilt competition

Twenty-two quilts are vying for top honors at the second annual Canada Packers Alberta quilt competition.

The competition is more than just the judging says Rae Hunter, Alberta Agriculture's quilt competition committee member. While the top three winners will be announced in Camrose on February 24, activities surrounding the competition will start at the beginning of the week.

A Sherwood Park quilter, Gordon Flowers will be putting on a one man show at Camrose's Duggan Mall starting on February 20. Flowers will be exhibiting his quilting skills by putting together a "watch the male" quilt. Patches are being sold to male members of the media in each of the communities hosting a quilt.

All of the 22 contest quilts will be on display in the mall February 23 through 25. Hunter says people who come to look at the quilts can take part in a "you be the judge" contest to see if they choose the same winner as the judges.

Two workshops will also be held in conjunction with the competition. Lectures and demonstrations of seminole, hand appliques and color and design will be held on February 22. A judges training workshop will be held the next day.

One of this year's 22 quilt makers is an 86-year old from Oyen. Leonard Durand learned his quilt making skills from his landlady and has made 450 quilts in the last eight years. Durand is acquainted with the winners circle; he won a gold medal at the 1984 Seniors Games in the open class quilt competition.

Durand's 1988 quilt was a winner at the Big Country competition in Oyen qualifying him as a finalist in the 1988-89 Canada Packers Alberta Quilt Competition. The Big Country Agricultural Society was one of 22 approved agricultural society hosts in the competition. (A complete list of hosts and preliminary winners is attached.)

(Cont'd)

Second annual quilt competition (cont'd)

The award winners will be announced at the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) awards banquet on February 24. The first place quilt will receive a $900 purchase prize from Canada Packers. The AAAS offers a $300 cash prize for second place and $200 goes to the third place winner from the host Camrose Regional Exhibition. All three winners receive bedside quilt racks from Scot-Erin Millwork of Calgary.

The competition is sponsored by Canada Packers, Alberta Agriculture, and the AAAS. Canada Packers sponsors similar competitions in Ontario and Manitoba and has established quilt collections in each of those provinces. Last year's winning quilt by Ethel Suder of Winterburn launched the Alberta collection.

Information about any of the competition events is available by contacting Hunter, Alberta Agriculture community services section, at 427-2171.

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Contact: Rae Hunter
427-2171

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

Workshops held in conjunction with quilt competition

Demonstrating quilting techniques and training judges are the focus of two workshops held in conjunction with the second annual provincial quilt competition.

The workshops will be held February 22 and 23 in Camrose where the competition winner will be announced on the 24.

Vivian Gregory and Elaine Breadon will be lecturing and demonstrating quilting techniques. Gregory will be discussing hand appliques. The Red Deer woman is a practising quilter, instructor and qualified judge. Some of her training has taken her to the United States.

Breadon, the Barrhead district home economist, will talk about seminole and color design. Her background includes developing introductory quilting courses and a unit on quilting for 4-H.

Group participation is featured in the afternoon sessions and participants are encouraged to bring scraps of different colors and textures to the workshop.

Competition and workshop co-chairman Janet Macdonald says the judges training workshop is open to people interested in becoming judges as well as to quilters. "We felt the judging workshop was really important. Many judges have gone to judge food or flowers and unexpectedly found they've also had to judge quilts. This workshop can give them the knowledge they need to judge quilts confidently."

Macdonald also encourages quilters to get involved in the judges workshop so they have a better understanding of the quality of work judges expect.

The workshop instructor is Judy Villett of Sherwood Park. Villett is an experienced prize winning quilter and exhibitor. She is a volunteer advisor to the Canada Packers Alberta Quilt committee and co-ordinator of judges for the competition.

(Cont'd)

Workshops held in conjunction with quilt competition (cont'd)

The workshops are supported by Canada Packers, the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS), Alberta Agriculture, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, the Camrose Regional Exhibition and Scot-Erin Millwork of Calgary. Several agricultural societies from across the province have supported or pledged support to the workshops.

Registration for the workshops is limited and pre-registration is required by February 15. Contact Janet Macdonald or Rae Hunter, Alberta Agriculture community services, for further information.

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Contact: Janet Macdonald
437-7558 (evenings)

Rae Hunter
427-2171

PRELIMINARY WINNERS
1988-89 CANADA PACKERS ALBERTA QUILT COMPETITION

| Host Agricultural Society | Winner |
|---|---|
| Battle River (Manning) | Alice Luiken, Manning, 836-2581 |
| Big Country (Oyen) | Leonard Durand, Oyen, 664-3984 |
| COOC Wanham | Lucille Lemire, Girouxville, 323-4359 |
| Carstairs | Tina Sawatsky, Carstairs, 337-2237 |
| Camrose | Martha Hendrickson, Bittern Lake |
| Delia | Goldie Berreth, Calgary, 271-2360 |
| Drayton Valley | Spruce Grove Golden Age Club, 962-4120 |
| Edgerton | Mary Belanger, Wainwright, 842-5113 |
| Edmonton Northlands | Ethel Suder, Winterburn, 962-2870 |
| Elnora | Audrey McMullen, Cold Lake, 639-4261 |
| Foremost | Rina Motycka, Raymond, 752-4251 |
| Grande Prairie | Phylis Cormack, Sundre, 638-2661 |
| Grimshaw | Irene Foster, Peace River, 359-2512 |
| Millarville | Lorraine Stangness, Strathmore, 934-4094 |
| Red Deer | Dorothy Bradshaw, Leslieville, 729-3014 |
| Smoky River-Donnelly | Lucille Lemire, Girouxville, 323-4359 |
| Spruce Grove | Ethel & Milton Suder, Winterburn 962-2870 |
| Stettler | Rose Wismer, Delburne, 749-2602 |
| Taber | Bernice Abell, Taber, 223-8161 |
| Vermilion | Julia Matthewson, Wainwright, 842-4777 |
| Viking | Mary Schwenk, Wainwright, 842-4572 |
| Yellowhead - Edson | Connie Bjorkquist, Jasper, 852-3066 |



AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

Start quilting for next year's competition

The first quilt in the Canada Packers collection has already travelled across the province as an exhibit for agricultural societies and quilters guilds.

Rae Hunter, Alberta Agriculture's quilt competition committee member, says the quilt "Star Chain" has been on the road since it captured top honors at the inaugural edition of the competition.

Its creator, Ethel Suder, of Winterburn hasn't been idle either. Two of her quilts qualified for the second annual Canada Packers Alberta quilt competition. Suder isn't the only quilter with two quilts on the list of 22 finalists. Lucille Lemire of Girouxville took first place with quilts at Smoky River and COCO Wanham fairs.

All of the 22 quilts in the 1988-89 competition first had to win competitions at host agricultural society fairs. (A list of the winners and host societies is attached.) The first, second and third place winners will be announced on February 24 in Camrose during the annual Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies (AAAS) awards banquet.

The first prize winning quilt is purchased by Canada Packers and added to their Alberta collection. The food processing company has similar quilt collections in both Ontario and Manitoba.

The competition is sponsored by Canada Packers in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture and the AAAS. Quilts must at least be double bed sized and titled. Both hand sewn and machine sewn quilts are eligible.

Rules and regulations for the third annual contest and a list of participating chartered agricultural societies are available from agricultural societies, district Alberta Agriculture offices or the AAAS at 427-2174.

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Contact: Rae Hunter
427-2171

January 30, 1989
For immediate release

# Agri-News Briefs

## WHERE'S THE BEEF

Did you know that an average serving of lean beef has 13 per cent less cholesterol than chicken and 10 per cent less than cod? Trimmed sirloin steak even compares favorably with roast chicken in terms of fat and calories. Updated data about beef's nutrient and fat content is highlighted in a new brochure called "No bull about beef". The brochure is available from Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6, by quoting homedex number 1132-10-8.

## FREE TRADE AND AGRICULTURE MEETING IN LETHBRIDGE

New Year's Day 1989 began an historic trade deal between Canada and the United States. For Alberta, a province that exports more agricultural products than its uses domestically, the trade agreement has many implications. Nithi Govindasamy, assistant director of Alberta Agriculture's trade and policy secretariat will discuss how the trade deal will affect farmers February 7 at the Agriculture Centre in Lethbridge. Among the items up for discussion are tripartite programs, marketing boards and the importance of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Anyone interested in attending should pre-register with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge at 381-5237.

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# AGRI-NEWS

FEB 2 1 1989

February 6, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Cripps special guest at video presentation

Thorsby Elementary School held a special premiere at their school recently as they shared their starring role in a new Alberta Agriculture farm safety program video with their parents and community dignitaries.

Students and teachers at the school co-operated in filming the 1988-89 edition of "A Teacher's Guide to Farm Safety" last November.

Premiere special guest, Shirley Cripps, Associate Minister of Agriculture and Drayton Valley MLA, presented school principal Al Senio with a commemorative plaque and a copy of the video.

The video assists teachers in integrating farm safety into their classroom curriculum.

Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley Cripps (right) presents Thorsby Elementary School principal Al Senio (left) with a plaque and video marking the school's participation in "A Teacher's Guide to Farm Safety".

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Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
Manager, Farm Safety Program
427-2186

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

Wheat prospects brighter in '89 say analysts

It may be time for Alberta farmers to start planting wheat again from the current international market situation.

Three analysts who discussed market outlook at the recent Alberta Canola Growers Association convention in Edmonton all say wheat prices will rise this year.

"I'm bullish on wheat. If you can plant wheat, plant it," Don Bousquet, general manager of the Winnipeg based Farm Market Network told the delegates. Bousquet even predicted international wheat prices to go as high as $7 to $8 per bushel.

Charles Pearson, Alberta Agriculture market analyst, says the price increases are a result of tight world wheat supplies. He says he expects an improvement of $50 to $60 per tonne over last year's wheat prices.

The third panelist, Dan Hiller, of Richardson Greenshields, echoed fellow panelists with his own prediction an initial Canadian Wheat Board wheat price of $5, or more, per bushel.

All of the analysts agreed canola prospects aren't as bright in 1989 as the canola prices of last summer, but each had a slightly different view on the outlook. Hiller says the crop carryover of over 1.2 million tonnes will mean a cutback of 25 to 30 per cent in the acres of canola that will be seeded. Pearson agrees the carryover will decrease canola seeded acreage to about 6.6 to 7.0 million acres, and that the carryover itself, will increase if there are no new buyers in the market or domestic canola crushers remain shut down.

Pearson adds he expects local canola markets will be in the $360 tonne range over the spring, but that price will depend on the South American oilseed crop. Brazil and Argentina have experienced some drought conditions during their growing season. His advice is to utilize the future markets to lock in prices for '89-90, rather than deferred delivery contracts offered by the elevator companies.

Bousquet predicts canola prices to top out this spring in the $340 per tonne range. He says he is "bullish" for canola in 1990.

(Cont'd)

Wheat prospects brighter for '89 say analysts (cont'd)

Bousquet says by 1990 the United States will increase canola oil imports. This change comes because of a high powered lobby by American health organizations to stop the use of highly fat saturated tropical oils in food processing. He also anticipates export demand to increase because the EEC is cutting down production. This decrease is partially due to wildlife problems.

All the analysts reminded their audience to pay close attention to reported crop conditions. Markets will be sensitive to and prices influenced by reports from the United States Department of Agriculture and Statistics Canada.

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Contact: Charles Pearson
427-5386

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

"Get on your mark" to produce best pig

The reward can be ample, and the challenge the contest demands is sizeable, too.

The competition is the annual Alberta Pork Congress sponsored contest to produce the best pig in the shortest time. Art Lange, of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch, who is also chairman of the pork congress swine committee, says the winners are usually well rewarded for their efforts.

"Last year the average selling price for the top ten was $2,680, with the number one carcass selling for $4,900. The contributor gets the selling price minus a 20 per cent commission taken by the congress. Compared to a regular market hog price of about $90 these days, that's a fantastic reward," says Lange.

The contest runs from the last two weeks in March until June 12, 1989. It is open to all hog producers in Alberta. Entries from outside the province are welcome.

Competition rules are simple, says Lange. Producers have to fill out an entry form and pay a $25 entry fee by February 28. During the final two weeks of March, pigs will be weighed and tagged on farms by provincial swine technicians. The pigs must not weigh more than 35 kg (77 lbs.) at that time. The farmer then has until June 12 to raise the pig to the market weight of 100 kg (220 lbs.).

On June 13, the pigs will be butchered and the carcasses graded by Agriculture Canada graders. The pigs that score the highest combination of carcass quality and growth rate are brought to the Alberta Pork Congress banquet on June 14 for auction.

Lange says the odds of winning are good. "We've had about 70 entries in the past, that's a one in seven chance."

(Cont'd)

"Get on your mark" to produce best pig (cont'd)

Entry forms and additional information are available from the Alberta Pork Congress Office in Red Deer at 340-5307 or Lange at 427-5319.

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Contact: Art Lange
427-5319

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Taking your financial pulse

It's sometimes reassuring to put your fingers to a pulse point and feel the rhythm of your heart beat in your veins. It's just a reassuring to take you financial pulse, says Alberta Agriculture's family resource management specialist.

Jean Wilson says district home economists across the province have been promoting seminars, workshops and also a package of information to assist people in reviewing both their financial and legal state.

"A majority of workshop attendance is female, but a seminar or even one of the factsheets can start very important discussions. The idea is for the farm couple to sit down together and look at their own situation," says Wilson. She adds it is also important for single people to take time for an annual review, especially if their decisions impact on other people.

"Seminar participants have been a variety of ages and their interests have reflected the age and stage they were at," says Wilson.

Some of the items to be considered is where valuable papers and documents are kept and if they are up-to-date. "We sometimes find couples whose wills are 10 or 20 years old. Some young couples haven't made wills," she says.

The overview should also include looking at property, how title is held, its fair market value and whether there is mortgage or debt against it. Insurance policies should also be checked to ensure coverage is adequate.

Wilson says retirement planning is also very critical. "You are never too young to start planning for your retirement. Besides the long term considerations, young couples also need to have something that could become liquid cash in an emergency," she says.

(Cont'd)

Taking your financial pulse (cont'd)

A family's financial pulse should also include looking at living expenses over the past year and financial goals, not only for the next year, but over the next three to five years. "This gives them a sense of where they have come from and where they are heading," Wilson says.

She says its particular important that wives be involved in the review. "It's a simple fact that women outlive men and one-third of our province's farmers today are over the age of 55. Women are likely to have to take over financial affairs and the business of the farm after a death. They have to be ready to take that step," says Wilson

Including a list of financial and legal advisors such as lawyer, accountant and insurance agent should be part of taking your financial pulse she says. "Get their professional help if you need it," Wilson says.

Anyone interested in a seminar or an information package to help them take their financial pulse should contact their nearest district Alberta Agriculture office.

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Contact: Jean Wilson
427-2412

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Matching cows to their environment for profit

There is no ideal beef animal for all production situations says a Lethbridge research scientist.

"Cattle that are genetically similar may vary in performance in different environments," says Dr. David Bailey of Agriculture Canada's research station in Lethbridge. Bailey is among more than 20 speakers who will share their expertise at Alberta Agriculture's Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

Bailey says to ensure efficiency, cattle must be matched with the individual farmer's available resources. Management, labor, feed and climate conditions are included on the resource list. It is important for the producer to recognize those resources are both human and environmental, he says.

"It's more economically feasible to match cows with resources than to change the environment," he says. "For example, cow calf producers wanting to maximize their net income need to appropriately combine their breed of cattle with the type of environment they are in."

Bailey will share the results of a 16 year study based on over 8,000 artificial insemination matings in both Alberta and Manitoba. Cow growth, cow losses, conception rates, milk production, calf growth rate, winter and summer feed requirements, weaning rates and weight, weaning weight per cow exposed and lifetime productivity were all evaluated in the study. The 10 breed crosses in this study performed differently in different locations, says Bailey.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA, and the farm business management branch in Olds

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

Our second most common ailment

Four out of five people will suffer back pain in their lifetime say two Alberta Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) therapists.

Donna Stickland, a physical therapist, and Valerie Swann, an occupational therapist, are among the more than 20 speakers who will be making presentations at this year's Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

They bring backgrounds in orthopedics, extended care, acute care and vocational rehabilitation and are using their experience to educate employers and their employees about back protection.

Stickland and Swann say lower back problems are second only to the common cold in terms of lost work time. They emphasize farmers run a high risk of developing back problems because of prolonged time in sitting positions on equipment and heavy manual work.

In their conference workshop Stickland and Swann will assist participants in identifying common causes of low back pain as well as how to protect the back while working. This protection can be through posture as well as fitting the function or design of the work place to the person.

The two therapists will also lead two evening bearpit sessions. Their audience will be encouraged to participate in problem solving and in exercises to increase back strength and flexibility.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, the UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4235

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Specified animals create more accounting

All horses are specified animals for tax purposes a farm accounting specialist told the recent Horse Breeders and Owners Conference.

Specified animals form part of inventory for the mandatory on elective provisions, says July Lloyd, a Calgary certified management accountant. Special rules are provided to calculate the cost of these animals she says. This will require setting up records to track the year of purchases and the cost of each specified animal.

Lloyd says other than the added burden of more record keeping, the specified animal category special rules for calculating add-back of the mandatory inventory adjustment gives owners an advantage of a lower adjustment than for other inventory.

Lloyd says the elective inventory provision which was restricted to livestock has been expanded to all farm inventory allowing farmers to exercise more control over taxable income. This will mean more record keeping but can be utilized to even taxes payable from year to year, she says.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

February 6, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

LETHBRIDGE WOMAN NAMED ALBERTA FARM WOMAN OF THE YEAR

While documenting the unpaid contributions of farm women to agriculture, the Alberta Farm Womens' Network decided rural women needed and deserved recognition for their work and the first annual Alberta Farm Woman of the Year award was born. The first recipient, Joyce Templeton, of Lethbridge, was presented with the award at the second Alberta Farm Womens' Conference in Red Deer on January 28. Network chairman Fay Mayberry says the award gives recognition to rural women that has been long overdue. She points out urban women are honored through awards such as "Tribute to Women" that have no rural parallel. Templeton was chosen from 12 nominees by a selection committee. She has been active in the Women of Unifarm, 4-H, her local seniors organization, a local history book and the Hereford breed association. In 1967 the Templetons were an Alberta Farm Master Family. The other nominees were: Helen Nikiforuk, Killiam; Elma Snider, Tofield, Gladys Wacowich, Redwater; Elma Bird, Carstairs; Mary Oulette, Grand Centre; Dorothy Bickley, senior, Red Deer; Alice Hoar, Innisfail; Zella Pimm, Grimshaw; Doris Spady, Alliance; Dorothy Williams, Cessford; and Helen Health, Berywn. For more information about the awards contact Fay Mayberry at 886-4129 or the Network office at 469-1254.

ANOTHER AWARD FOR CANOLA OIL

Canadians already have made canola their number one cooking and salad oil, and the canola industry is hoping a recent American award will increase canola oil consumption in the U.S. market. The prestigious American College of Nutrition (ACN) has made its first ever official "product acceptance award" to an American canola oil product. The ACN's product acceptance seal will soon be making its appearance on Puritan Oil bottles. Puritan is manufactured by Procter and Gamble and is made from 100 per cent canola oil. In 1987 Puritan was named "food product of the year" by the American Health Foundation's Food and

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

ANOTHER AWARD FOR CANOLA OIL (cont'd)

Nutrition Committee. Canola oil is recognized because of its unique fatty acid composition. For an increasingly health conscious society, canola oil has just six per cent saturated fat. That's from 30 to 60 per cent less than other common oils such as sunflower, corn and soybean oils. Currently in Canada, canola oil captures 80 per cent of the salad oil segment of the market, half of the shortening market and 40 per cent of the margarine market.

INDUSTRY SHOULD PUSH CANOLA PROFILE

The canola industry has to push the profile of their healthy product a Canbra Foods company executive told the annual Alberta Canola Growers Association convention in Edmonton. "We have not done a good job as an industry in educating our consumers," Mike Pulliam told the delegates. He said canola's image had to be improved and the product had to be aggressively marketed. Later in the convention, delegates endorsed a resolution requesting Alberta Agriculture's marketing division work with the federal government, the Canola Council of Canada and the Western Crushers Association to "develop a procedure to enhance and promote the value of canola oil." Pulliam also told the delegates that the Canada-U.S. trade agreement was a bright light in a currently tough canola market situation. He said the agreement won't change the situation overnight, but will eventually have a positive impact on the canola industry. As well as providing access to the American market, he said the agreement could provide a framework for access to other markets. Pulliam called for accelerated tariff removal for more immediate access to offset the loss of Western Grain Transportation Act advantages from the trade agreement.

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Alberta
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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Tripartite stabilization committees approve payments

Alberta producers enrolled in national tripartite stabilization programs for red meats and sugar beets can expect cheques in the mail in March.

The national red meat stabilization committees have recently confirmed stabilization payments for the fourth quarter of 1988 and the national sugar beet stabilization committee has confirmed final payments for the 1987 sugar beet crop, says Ken Moholitny, administrative director for Alberta Agriculture's centralized program support.

Payments will be made for slaughter cattle, feeder cattle, hogs, lambs and sugar beets. No payment will be made for the cow-calf program, as the national average selling price of calves during 1988 exceeded the support price of the cow-calf program.

The national average selling price for slaughter cattle was $7.53/cwt less than the support price, triggering a payout of $87.92/cwt. Feeder cattle prices were $4.83/cwt below the support price creating a payout of $38.56 per head.

Hog prices continued to drop in the fourth quarter of 1988 and the stabilization payment reflects this decrease. The national average selling price of $122.11/ckg was $46.69 less than the fourth quarter program support price. Participating hog producers will receive $37.08 per hog sold.

The lamb stabilization payout of $12.59 per head for eligible sales during September, October and November, 1988 will bring total producer returns to 95 per cent of the ten-year average price.

Herb Lock, provincial administrator of red meat tripartite stabilization plans, says the payouts reflect a combination of low market prices and higher feed costs. Both affect the profit margins of red meat producers.

(Cont'd)

Tripartite stabilization committees approve payments (cont'd)

"National Tripartite Stabilization, by virtue of a series of recent payouts, demonstrates how useful and effective it can be in reducing market risks and providing a more stable environment for future planning and production purposes," says Lock.

A final payment of $7.91 per standard tonne will be paid to Alberta sugar beet producers on their 1987 crop. The total payment for the 1987 crop is $13.36 per standard tonne.

In the past, says Moholitny, Alberta's sugar beet producers had to rely on ad hoc support under The Agriculture Stabilization Act during periods of low market returns.

"While this assistance was always welcomed, its ad hoc nature meant that producers faced continuous uncertainties regarding market returns and, if in fact, assistance would be available, and how much. National Tripartite Stabilization now allows sugar beet growers to participate in a program that reduces these uncertainties by providing long term market return stability for the industry," Moholitny says.

Producer participation in each of the stabilization programs is voluntary. Farmers, the provincial government and federal government share equally in program premiums. Payments from the plan are designed to balance over time with the premiums paid into the plan.

The national tripartite plans are designed to moderate farm income losses due to sudden input cost increases or abrupt changes in market prices common in agricultural commodity markets.

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Contact: Ken Moholitny
422-9167

Herb Lock
422-0137

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Blackleg of canola response plan

Alberta canola producers are currently being furnished with details of a comprehensive response plan to control the virulent blackleg of canola disease.

Dr. Ieuan Evans recently presented details of the plan to Alberta Canola Growers Association (AGCA) convention delegates. They endorsed the plan in principal.

Evans says the response plan has received strong support from municipal districts, growers and the canola industry in general. He, and other Alberta Agriculture crop protection branch staff, have been at meetings province-wide telling farmers about the very destructive disease and how to prevent it spreading to their canola crops.

Details about prevention and control and the free government sponsored program to test seed samples for the disease are in a brochure that has been mailed to all producers in the province.

The objectives of the response plan are to prevent the spread of the fungus in non-infested areas and control disease spread in areas that have already been infested, says Evans, plant pathology supervisor with Alberta Agriculture's crop protection branch.

"Prevention is the first line of defence," says Evans. This defence includes seed testing for presence of the fungus, fungicide treatment of seed when seeding, crop rotation and control of volunteer canola and wild mustard weeds.

"I must stress the importance of preventative measures," says Evans. "This disease isn't as fast moving as a rust that might sweep across the Prairies in one growing season. Virulent blackleg of canola was first detected in 1976 in Saskatchewan, it's widespread there now. It wasn't found in Alberta until six years ago."

Once blackleg has infested a field, control measures such as burying stubble have to be taken. Recommended prevention steps should also be followed says Evans.

(Cont'd)

Blackleg of canola reponse plan (cont'd)

Evans says for the response program to work, producer co-operation is essential. He told the ACGA delegates they could do their part by not seeding any canola that tests positive for the fungus, by using four-year crop rotations and by controlling weeds in intervening crops.

"Prevention and control is all a matter of good crop management. Crop rotation is important for controlling more than just blackleg, for example Sclerotinia white mould, Alternaria black spot and weeds. Seed treatment also controls seedling blight and flea beetles," he says.

Alberta Agriculture has been receiving input to develop the response plan since last September says Evans. The department will be supplying extension information on the disease to producers through district agriculturists and agricultural fieldmen.

For more information about the response program, producers should contact their district Alberta Agriculture office.

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Contact: Ieuan Evans
427-7098

For immediate release
February 13, 1989

# Seminar spotlight on dairy production issues

Nutrition, production medicine, energy, animal rights and implications of growth hormones are the major agenda items at the Western Canadian Dairy Seminar March 14 through 17 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

Brian Rhiness, Alberta Agriculture's provincial dairy specialist, says the seminar is designed for anyone who is involved in the dairy industry. Rhiness, who is also a member of the seminar's program committee, says the seminar's aim is to provide the latest information to participants.

"We want to improve knowledge and decision-making abilities in the industry as a whole. Updates about technology and production methods are a very key part of this seminar.

"The seminar has a lot of opportunity for exchange of ideas whether it's in group discussion with panels, talking informally with featured speakers or talking with your peers in the industry. We've planned bearpit sessions for both Wednesday and Thursday evenings," he says.

This year's seminar has a special feature, a basic nutrition workshop on March 14 that precedes seminar activities. Workshop instructors from Alberta Agriculture will cover basic ruminant nutrition. Basic nutrition plus the importance of feed sampling, balanced rations and interpreting feed results are part of workshop activities. A set of notes will be provided.

"This workshop has a limit of 15 participants on a first-come first-served basis, so if a producer or herdsman is interested they should contact us soon to register," says Rhiness.

A slate of international experts are among the speakers who will address dairy industry issues at the seminar. Two of those speakers are from Europe. Seerb Tamminga, of the Institute of Livestock Feeding and Nutrition Research in Lelystad, Holland will discuss forage digestion as influenced by feed fats and feeding management with high concentrate diets.

(Cont'd)

Seminar spotlight on dairy production issues (cont'd)

John Webster will present his thoughts on the science of animal welfare and take part in a panel discussion on the dairy industry and the animal rights movement. Webster is a professor at England's University of Bristol. He will also discuss improved energy and protein in dairy cattle feed.

Two American professors will also address the seminar in their areas of expertise. Mike Hutjens, of the University of Illinois, will examine applied aspects of feeding fat to high producing cows and the role of feed additives in energy systems.

Jeff Reneau, of the University of Minnesota, will talk about how production medicine programs can affect the producer's bottom line. Production medicine is also addressed by Otto Radostits who will take a veterinarian's view of production medicine in the future. Radostits is from the Western College of Veterinarian Medicine in Saskatoon.

The Western Canadian Dairy Seminar is co-operatively sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture Canada, the Alberta Milk Producers Association, the Alberta Veterinary Medical Association, the University of Alberta and representatives of the dairy industry.

Registration information is available from district Alberta Agriculture offices, the dairy production branch at 352-1223 and the University of Alberta by calling Sheila at 492-3029.

Rhiness also points out that a limited number of David Butchart Pope scholarships are available to young people interested in attending the seminar. Information and application forms are available from the university contact above.

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Contact: Brian Rhiness
352-1223

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Manual provides practical guide to silage making

Alberta farmers who want superior results in harvesting, storing and feeding silage can get information about the most up-to-date methods in a new Alberta Agriculture manual.

Even experienced silage makers should have the Silage Manual as a reference book, says Craig Edwards, farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "This manual contains information that would be very difficult to find from other sources and the methods are explained so farmers can adapt proven practices to their own individual situations," says Edwards.

Edwards says farmers who want to use the manual should be aware cost estimates in it are not the results of a cost of production study. The manual has tables of comparative costs prepared by Edwards.

"The comparative costs are calculated the same way for each typical system, so readers can understand the relationship between the costs of the different components. The tables also show a format that farmers can use to calculate the fixed and variable costs of a system they are considering, and then be able to compare it with other systems," he says.

Edwards also has another caution for anyone using the manual. "If a farmer went out and purchased all the components of one of the typical systems in the manual, there could be a big difference between the actual cash flow and the costs shown in the manual."

Actual cash flows depend on the each farmer's individual income position Edwards explains. The typical costs shown in the manual are useful as a quick comparison, but don't include income tax adjustments for individual situations, he says.

(Cont'd)

Manual provides practical guide to silage making (cont'd)

Edwards also says farmers with limited income and capital should carefully consider their options before they invest in silage machinery.

"They need to ask themselves if they can afford an investment in silage equipment over other investment opportunities. They also have to consider alternatives such as custom hiring or co-operating with other farmers in sharing equipment and working together," he says.

The Silage Manual is available through Alberta Agriculture district offices or by contacting the Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Farmers interested in improving silage methods may also be interested in a recently released Alberta Agriculture video, "Let's Make Silage". The 12 minute video is hosted by forage specialist Bjorne Berg and animal nutritionist Rick Corbett. The video is available through most Alberta Agriculture district video libraries.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Take control over stress

Handling stress effectively is the key to controlling personal well-being says psychologist Lynda Haverstock.

"Our individual reactions to frustrations, conflicts and pressures is the way many of us define stress," she says. Haverstock, an associate at the newly founded Centre of Agricultural Medicine in Saskatoon, will be one of the speakers at the 1989 Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference at the Kananaskis Lodge March 5 through 8.

Haverstock says that stress is a normal part of life. Every situation has stress whether it is positive or negative. An individual's response depends on how they perceive the situation.

In her conference session Haverstock will explain how to handle stress effectively. "First we have to be able to identify the stressors in our lives. Some of them are out of our control, like the weather, while others can be decreased with forethought and planning," she says.

The risk of stress causing serious damage to physical and emotional well-being is increased by the length of time the negative stress is experienced says Haverstock. She emphasizes that prolonged stress lowers productivity and robs people of happiness and satisfaction.

Regaining control over that stress requires a commitment to self. "We must make time to care for ourselves and accept the responsibility for our overall health and sense of well-being," she says.

Haverstock does clinical work at the Saskatoon Mental Health Clinic and teaches at the University of Saskatchewan. She was born and raised in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Myth, reality and the greenhouse effect

Scientific statements about the greenhouse effect are often misinterpreted and inflated by the media says a climate specialist who will be sharing his views on recent weather patterns at the 1989 Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference.

"Scientific observations have been amplified to the point where many people believe that we are headed for disaster," says Tim Ball. Ball is a climatology specialist with the University of Winnipeg's department of geography. He is among the more than 20 speakers slated to share their expertise at the 1989 MATFP conference March 5 through 8 at the Lodge at Kananasksis.

Ball says that the 1980s have been marked by dramatic changes in climate. The last ten years have been a period of record breaking weather conditions, and the public has become increasingly concerned as scientists talk about the impact of these changes, he says.

Unfortunately, Ball says, there are many errors and misconceptions about the various environmental changes that have occurred. He also says there are many fallacies about the predicted impact of those changes on Prairie agriculture.

"My presentation will calm hysteria and look at what is actually happening, especially from the perspective of the Alberta farmer," says Ball.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA, and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

February 13, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

## PEAT SOIL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

The Northwest Alberta Peat Soil Association will be discussing future demonstration projects among other business at its annual meeting February 20 at the Linaria Hall (one and one-quarter miles east of Linaria school). The day long meeting includes a business meeting and discussion of the 1988 annual report. On the afternoon agenda are presentations on last year's deep plowing and soil temperature monitoring plots, results from soils branch trials on copper and soil layering versus plowing and forage production. The keynote speaker is Keith Head, manager of Saskatchewan Agriculture's organic soils project. For more information about the meeting, or to register, contact either the district Alberta Agriculture office in Barrhead (674-8213) or Westlock (349-4465).

## CALLING JUNIOR SEED EXHIBITORS

Exhibitors have been showing their prize seed at a seed fair in Lethbridge since 1906. This year's edition of the North American Seed Fair, from March 1 through 4, offers 14 pedigreed and 17 open class competitions. Among the open classes are nine junior classes. The fair, timed with the Lethbridge Ag Expo, drew more than 600 exhibitors in 1988. Organizers are especially interested in drawing young exhibitors to the fair. "It's an excellent opportunity for them to learn more about presentation," says Don Milne. Seed samples for the fair are required by February 20. For more information about the seed fair contact Milne at 327-5794 or 328-4491 or the Lethbridge and District Exhibition Association at 3401-6th Avenue South, Lethbridge, T1J 1G6.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

ALBERTA CORN SCHOOL

Corn producers can discuss issues related to their crop at the Alberta Corn School February 22 at Burdett Community Hall. The afternoon session will include presentations on climate change, the Quebec perspective on short season corn hybrids, head smut in corn, a Russian wheat aphid update, irrigation management with infra-red temperatures and corn breeding. Trade booths will also be on site with time scheduled for browsing through the displays. The evening banquet features speaker Dr. David Major of the Lethbridge Agriculture Canada research station. To pre-register for the corn school contact Blair Roth in Lethbridge at 381-5124 or Ken MacPhail in Bow Island at 545-2233.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION AND DAIRY HERD MANAGEMENT

There is still time for dairy herd owners and employees to register for a practical artificial insemination and dairy herd management short course at Olds College. The course provides practical and technical training in anatomy and physiology of the bull and cow, genetics and breeding programs, heat detection, computer mating of dairy cattle, nutrition and reproduction problems. Approximately 50 per cent of the course will be hands-on sessions. The registration deadline for the courses is February 20. One course will run from March 6 through 17 and another from April 17 through 28. For registration or other information contact extension services at Olds College at 556-8344.

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## Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in April, May, June, 1989 . Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization/contact):

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Please return this form by February 24, 1989 to:

Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed March 6, 1989.)

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February 20, 1989

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Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Rental rates require real negotiation

More than dollars should be considered when landlords and tenants sit down to determine a cropland rental rate for 1989 says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Garth Nickorick, a farm management economist, says the first step is to get the two sides to understand each others wants and needs in the agreement. The dollars and cents, he says, can come later.

"The renter wants or needs an after-expense return that pays for the wear and tear on machinery and for the time spent doing the work. This is aside from a hoped for real profit which would strengthen the home farm or pay off fixed-asset debt.

"Landlords, on the other hand, want to receive enough to pay the taxes and what they consider a fair return on the use of their land asset. They usually want to receive a rental equal to those around them," he says. Farming ability and past performance of prospective tenants may also be considered by landlords, especially in crop sharing agreements.

Nickorick says initial indications are that 1989 cash rents will be higher than those paid in 1988. "Some of the pessimism of last year has eroded with higher grain and oilseed prices in the past six months," he says.

Nickorick stresses the importance of both parties sitting down together and negotiating an agreement that suits them. To assist in that process, he suggests using an Alberta Agriculture publication, "Planning with Crop Choice Worksheets".

"It's a valuable planning and negotiating tool as revenue and expenses can be clearly shown. It allows both parties to meet on a common footing with an understanding of the economics and then be able to establish a rent for 1989," he says.

(Cont'd)

Rental rates require real negotiation (cont'd)

For more information, or a copy of the worksheet, contact Nickorick at the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0. The worksheet is also available through Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6 by quoting Agdex 815-2.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

"Blasting" the soil conservation message

The name, Stanislaw Sandblasters, is unique but the group's objective of trying to change farmer's attitudes about soil conservation is a growing concern across the province and nation.

Ron Hrudey, a Mundare area farmer, is one of the driving forces behind the group of producers and technical experts who have banded together to promote soil conservation in the counties of Lamont, Two Hills and Minburn.

Hrudey has been farming full-time since 1980. He says although he had been concerned about soil erosion before, last spring's dust storms that stripped tons of top soil from his land motivated him to get actively involved in conservation.

Vegreville district agriculturist Barry Bishop says Hrudey came into his office to ask about soil conservation and the group has grown from that initial meeting last October. A steering committee that includes producers, agricultural fieldmen from the three counties, corresponding DAs and a Prairie Farm Rehabiliation Administration (PFRA) soil conservationist have been developing a plan of action.

Recently the Sandblasters held their first information meeting at the namesake Stanislaw Hall (17 miles north west of Vegreville) and say it was an overwhelming success.

"As I was driving through the snow drifts on the way to the meeting I wasn't very hopeful," admits Bishop. He adds he was both surprised and pleased when over 80 farmers showed up. "We had very good representation from around the Vegreville, Andrew and Willingdon areas. We even had people who have land in Mannville there," he says.

Hrudey says the weather did prevent a bigger turnout and he's had calls since from interested people.

Communicating the soil conservation message will take a number of forms says Hrudey. Information meetings will continue and a newsletter is planned. As well, a display is being developed. The display, says Hrudey, will be turning up at a variety of places.

(Cont'd)

"Blasting" the soil conservation message (cont'd)

"The display isn't just for our own meetings. It will be at shopping centres. It will be at other farm meetings. People won't be able to ignore the message because it's going to be everywhere.

"We want to make farmers aware of the erosion problem, to have them accept it and to be sufficiently versed in conservation practices to use them," he says.

Hrudey says the Sandblasters want to show that simple measures can be used to combat erosion which is a major concern in his light soils area. Different tillage practices and managing stubble "trash" are primary among the conservation methods they are promoting.

Changing farmer attitudes is the key to bringing about changes in their land management. Shifting the emphasis from production to the foundation of their farms--the soil--is the most critical part of the Sandblasters message.

"How long are you going to last if you keep letting the soil blow away?" is the question Hrudey says farmers have to ask themselves.

Bishop says tillage demonstration projects are also in the works and local equipment dealers have offered to assist by providing equipment to test the different methods. Comparison of low crown shovel cultivation and chemfallow with conventional fallow is one of the planned projects, he says. A field day has been tentatively scheduled for July 20. A tour of the demonstration projects is one of the main agenda items.

Hrudey says the group is hoping for active participation from producers. People interested in more information about the Sandblasters can contact the DAs or agricultural fieldmen in Vegreville, Lamont, or Two Hills, the PFRA in Vegreville or Hrudey.

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Contact: Barry Bishop
632-5400

Ron Hrudey
764-2115

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Workshop focus on alfalfa leaf cutting bee management

Sharing successful management practices will keep producers as busy as their bees on March 14 at an alfalfa leaf cutting bee workshop in St. Paul.

"The workshop is designed primarily for experienced producers, but prospective ones are also welcome to attend," says Harvey Yoder, Lac La Biche district agriculturist. He adds if there is enough interest a session especially for new producers will be offered concurrently with other workshop activities.

He says one highlight of the workshop will be an afternoon grower panel discussion. Panelists will describe their operations and the management techniques that have worked for them.

Management of alfalfa leaf cutting bee operations is the focus of the workshop. Major topics on the agenda include bee incubation, control of parasites, shelters and nesting materials and general management of bees in the field.

Yoder says bee quality, a report on operations in the Peace River area and weed control and fertilizing alfalfa stands for seed production will also be discussed. Bee broker, Weldon Hobbs, from Lethbridge will also be on hand to talk about bee and seed marketing opportunities in the United States.

Apiculture specialist Dorothy Murell is one of the featured speakers. Murell works for the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture. Peace River producer Bob Gartley, of Eaglesham, will share his experience in the industry. Industry representatives will have samples of equipment and nesting material on display, says Yoder.

Pre-registration is required before March 10. The registration fee of $10 can be sent to the County of St. Paul, Box 188, St. Paul, T0A 3A0.

(Cont'd)

Workshop focus on alfalfa leaf cutting bee management (cont'd)

More detailed information about the workshop is available by contacting Alberta Agriculture district offices in St. Paul, Lamont or Lac La Biche.

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Contact: Harvey Yoder
Lac La Biche DA
623-5218

Dave Wong
Lamont DA
895-2219

Kristy Piquette
St. Paul DA
645-6301

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Malt barley production and marketing seminars

Producing the right malting barley for the available markets has become an interest of barley growers who want to get the best possible return for their crop.

Two seminars next month, one in Vegreville on March 2 and the other in Strathmore on March 3, are geared to malt barley production and marketing.

"Through the seminars we hope to provide producers with more technical information and the how-to in getting malt grades," says Barry Bishop, Vegreville district agriculturist.

"There will also be a look at the future--what malters are looking for and what researchers are doing in variety development," he says

Keynotes speakers will discuss varieties and production, industry selection of malts and fertilizing malt barley. Murray McClelland, supervisor of cereal crops for Alberta Agriculture will talk about malt barley varieties and production. A representative of Canada Malting Ltd. of Calgary will also be on hand. Bob Sutton will discuss proper malt sampling and the selection process. Dale Marantz, a representative of Cominco, will discuss fertilizers.

Each session will also feature producer panels at the end of the day, says Bishop. These panels will give seminar participants a chance to discuss issues, varieties and marketing with other growers.

The seminars are jointly sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, SeCan Association and the Western Barley Growers Association. Registration and other information is available by contacting Alberta Agriculture district offices in Vegreville and Strathmore.

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Contact: Barry Bishop
632-5400

Scott Meers
934-3355

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Resource issue of the next century

Our water legacy will become more and more important says a climatology specialist who will be speaking at the 1989 Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference.

"Few Canadians are aware that the laws regarding water are very different in Canada than they are in the United States. Even fewer are aware of the move towards making water a commodity," says Tim Ball, a professor with University of Winnipeg's geography department. Ball is one of more than 20 speakers featured at the conference March 5 through 8 at the Lodge at Kananaskis.

Canada has approximately 25 per cent of the world's freshwater supply in rivers, lakes, muskeg, ice and groundwater. "This uneven distribution of water between the two countries will make the future of water on the continent the resource issue of the 21st century," says Ball.

Ball emphasizes that competition for water will increase as the supply of water decreases. "Increases in American population and per capita consumption coupled with the decrease of available pure water supplies will mean an expanding desire to transfer water from the north."

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Grasshopper numbers continue to decrease

For the third consecutive year grasshopper numbers will continue their slow population decline in Alberta.

Low to moderate infestations are forecasted for 1989, except in some southwestern counties. The County of Cardston is one area where severe infestation could re-establish if spring and summer weather are warm and dry says Jim Jones, Alberta Agriculture entomologist based at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks.

A major factor in determining what will happen to the grasshopper population is the weather. Conditions last year have meant a decline in their numbers for 1989.

"Weather is a deciding factor in grasshopper reproduction and hatching. The grasshopper outbreak began with unusually warm and dry late summers in 1983 and 1984," says Jones.

Generally warm dry springs are the most favorable hatching conditions. Wet cooler soil delays hatching and if it's prolonged can even promote growth a fungus that attacks eggs in the soil.

Conditions from the previous fall and winter also affect the grasshopper population, he says. "Any fall moisture will slow down the adult population and affect the number of eggs laid. If there is too little moisture over the fall and winter, then incubating eggs can be set back or destroyed."

A fungus (Entomophaga grylli) has also taken a toll on the grasshopper population, but Jones says reports say it has affected less than five per cent of grasshoppers at survey sites.

One of the forecast team, Dr. Dan Johnson, of the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lethbridge says that a new method of insect pest surveillance and forecasting is now being used to produce the Alberta grasshopper forecast.

"The new approach provides greater precision and flexibility in forecasting both distribution and abundance of grasshoppers than with previous methods. It also has reduced the time involved in preparing a forecast," he says.

(Cont'd)

Grasshopper numbers continue to decline (cont'd)

The Alberta grasshopper forecast is developed jointly by Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division and the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lethbridge.

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Contact: Jim Jones
362-3391

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

New home economist in Lethbridge

Anne Penner is Alberta Agriculture's newest district home economist and is joining the staff at the Lethbridge district office.

"Along with providing traditional home economics information and advice, my duties will include providing information about finances, Alberta products and community skills," she says. She will also be working closely with area 4-H clubs.

Penner is a 1983 graduate of the University of Manitoba with a bachelor of human ecology (home economics) degree specializing in clothing and textiles. She was born in Altona and was raised on a dairy farm outside of Steinbach, Manitoba.

Most recently Penner did volunteer work in the fall of 1988 for the Manitoba Home Economics Directorate teaching basic sewing to pregnant teenagers and compiling evaluation results of the 1988 Manitoba Farm Womens' Conference.

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Contact: Anne Penner
381-5237

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Regional dairy specialist appointed in Red Deer

A former animal nutritionist with Alberta Agriculture has been appointed regional dairy specialist in Red Deer.

Al McNeil worked with department while he was completing his M.Sc. from the University of British Columbia. He graduated from the UBC in 1978 with a B.Sc. (agriculture).

As regional dairy specialist, McNeil will provide extension services to central Alberta dairy producers, related industry and Alberta Agriculture staff. He will also do on-farm consultation and research.

"I'm looking forward to meeting and working with the dairy producers in the north central region," he says.

Most recently McNeil has been employed as a nutritionist with the Shur-Gain division of Canada Packers.

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Contact: Al McNeil
340-5337

February 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Agri-News Briefs

## CEREAL AND OILSEEDS PRODUCTION UPDATE

Central Alberta producers can benefit from a day long seminar bringing them the latest information on field crops for 1989. The seminar is in Lacombe on March 7. Regional crop specialist Wayne Jackson will discuss varieties, fertilizers and management. District Agriculturists Neil Miller will focus on the advantages of using the 1000 kernel seed weight. Also on the agenda is a description of the blackleg of canola response program and a weed control update. Most of the afternoon will be devoted to a crop disease workshop. Registration and other information is available by contacting the Alberta Agriculture district office in Lacombe at 782-3301.

## BERRY PRODUCTION COURSES RESCHEDULED

Winter weather caused a rescheduling of berry production courses originally slated for Edmonton on January 31 and February 1. The courses have been moved to the new dates of February 28 and March 1 and to a new location, the Regency Hotel. The courses are designed both for the commercial berry producer and anyone interested in getting into the industry. Strawberries, raspberries and saskatoons are on the agenda. For more information contact Lloyd Hauser, fruit crop specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks at 362-3391.

## PASTURE TO PLATE

Alberta beef is internationally recognized for its quality. Beef quality from the perspective of the producer and the consumer is the focus of an afternoon seminar in Lacombe on March 1. Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Cattle Commission, the seminar will look at new trends and technology in production as well as what consumers want from beef and how they select their meat. Pre-register with the Lacombe district office at 782-3301.

(Cont'd)

COWBOY FEEDLOT SCHOOL

Training feedlot staff in the essential aspects of the cattle feeding industry is the purpose behind Olds College's cowboy feedlot school. Module 2--health, disease prevention and treatment--begins on February 27 running until March 3. The third module, cowboy arithmetic and team building starts on March 6 running through March 9. Lectures will be supplemented with hands-on exposure and tours. For more information contact Olds College department of extension services at 556-8344.

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# AGRI-NEWS

February 27, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Wheat outlook positive

The 1989-90 world wheat outlook remains positive says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"International wheat prices are expected to remain at current levels in the new crop year. That's assuming there are favorable conditions for wheat production in the world's major producing areas," says Charles Pearson in his latest grains situation and outlook report.

"A drought or quality problem in any one of the major exporting countries, or in the Soviet Union and China, would push international wheat prices substantially higher," he adds.

Pearson says the federal government is expected to leave 1989-90 Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) initial wheat payments the same as the current crop year's, at about $155 per tonne (in-store Alberta elevator) for Number 1 Canadian Western Red Spring (CWRS) wheat.

International wheat prices have gradually improved between November and January. This trend is despite both European Community (EC) and U.S. use of export subsidies in targeted markets.

The 1988-89 world wheat supply-demand balance has tightened substantially. The smallest year end carryover since the 1981-82 crop year and the lowest stocks use ratio since the 1971-72 crop year have been forecast. The 1988-89 world wheat stocks are at critically low levels and even threatens world food supply security.

North American drought accounted for the majority of the decline in 1987-88 wheat production by the world's big five exporters--Canada, Australia, Argentina, the U.S and the EC, says Pearson.

Drought on the Canadian prairies slashed both total wheat production and crop yield. Statistics Canada estimates production at 15.7 million tonnes, down 26 million tonnes from 1987. Average wheat yields at 18 bushels per acre were down 37 per cent from the previous year.

Canadian producers marketed 8.7 million tonnes to January 22, down from the 11.5 million tonnes during the same period in the previous crop year.

(Cont'd)

Canada's best customer has remained China. The Chinese purchased 2.3 million tonnes in the first five months of the crop year. That's down only 300,000 tonnes compared with the 1987 figures.

The situation and outlook also examines the feedseed and oilseed markets. He says canola prices will probably bottom out in February and then move higher in the spring. "Based on the assumption of adequate seeding moisture conditions in both the U.S. and Canada, Winnipeg canola futures prices are expected to move back into the $340 to $360 range by May," he says.

Pearson says Prairie farmers, with improved prospects in other crops, are expected to plant less canola this spring returning to more normal canola acreage and rotations.

Canadian barley production was down substantially in 1988 he says reflecting both reduced seeded acres and the impact of the Prairie drought. "Given expectations of reduced CWB exports 1988-89 barley supplies will be adequate for domestic feed usage," he says.

For more details, or a copy of the quarterly report, contact Charles Pearson at 427-5386.

February 27, 1988
For immediate release

# Slaughter cattle prices could rise

Exchange rates will remain an important player in determining the prices Alberta slaughter cattle producers receive in 1989 says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

"If exchange rates remain constant, reduced North American beef output will lead to stronger prices for Alberta slaughter steers than last year," says Ron Gietz in his quarterly livestock situation and outlook.

A tight supply of slaughter cattle combined with stable demand should lead to higher prices he adds. "Record high slaughter cattle prices stateside should result in higher prices in Canada as well. Current projections are for direct sale slaughter steers in Alberta to average $84 per cwt in 1989, slightly above the record high annual average of $83.45 set in 1987.

"These predictions are based on the Canadian dollar continuing to trade in an 84 to 85 cents U.S. range over the remainder of 1989. Any further appreciation of the Canadian dollar vis-a-vis its American counterpart will lead directly to reduced returns for Canadian cattlemen," he says.

Gietz says two important trends in Alberta's slaughter cattle industry in 1988 will reverse in 1989. Average steer carcass slaughter weights, after climbing dramatically in 1988, are expected to drop back into line with long-range trends in 1989. Live exports of slaughter cattle to the U.S. will moderate from last year's record pace as domestic slaughter increases. Late in the year Cargill's High River plant will become a significant factor in the market, he says. The plant is currently scheduled to begin operations in June.

The outlook for feeder cattle is more uncertain. Gietz says feeder prices will depend on slaughter cattle prices, weather conditions, and risks taken by feedlot operators.

(Cont'd)

Slaughter cattle prices could rise (cont'd)

On the whole Gietz predicts a stable market. "Prices for heavy feeders are likely to peak in the first quarter around $95 to $100 per cwt before slipping to $85 to $90 range for most of the year.

"Prices for calves in the fall are expected to range within $5 per cwt of last year's quotes, with quality continuing to remain the most important factor for the feeder market."

Gietz says the outlook for replacement stock is also steady in comparison to last year's prices, based on continuing strength in the overall beef complex, and continued interest in herd expansion.

For more details, or a copy of the quarterly livestock situation and outlook, contact Ron Gietz at 427-5376.

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February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Steady lamb prices for 1989

A stable North American market points towards steady lamb prices this year says an Alberta Agriculture market analyst.

Last year prices fluctuated widely says Ron Gietz in his quarterly situation and outlook. "Alberta lamb producers enjoyed near-record prices in the first half of 1988 as strong prices from 1987 carried over. However, lamb prices dropped drastically in June and July following a market slump prompted by an oversupply of overfed lambs in the western United States."

Gietz says Alberta prices began a slow recovery in November and December. He forecasts that slaughter lamb prices in 1989 are likely to average slightly below last year's annual average Lambco bid range of $77 to $80 per cwt.

"There won't be the dramatic price changes of last year. Prices will increase slightly before slipping in the fall with higher volumes. The predicted price levels are likely to trigger modest payouts under national tripartite stabilization," he says.

Feeder lamb prices are expected to remain steady with current price levels. "As with hog prices, the price of barley will be the single most important factor affecting future prices."

For more details or a copy of the quarterly livestock situation and outlook contact Ron Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376.

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February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Cautious outlook for Alberta hogs

Hog prices that sagged with record production in 1988 will push up as both Canadian and American producers reduce their herds, says an Alberta Agricultural market analyst.

Last year was the fifth-straight year of post-war hog production highs says Ron Gietz, livestock analyst in his quarterly market situation and outlook report. Alberta production increased by 12 per cent. Several times in 1988, single-week marketing records of live slaughter hogs were set. However, Canadian output is expected to be two per cent less in 1989 than it was during last year's record performance.

"Price improvements will be gradual, not dramatic," says Gietz. He adds the improved prices will likely be only for the first three quarters of 1989 before a normal seasonal price drop in the fall.

Gietz forecasts producer payment prices of between $50 and $55 per cwt in the first three months of this year, followed by a $60 to $65 range in the second quarter. An annual price peak will probably be in June and be around $70 per cwt. Third quarter prices are predicted at between $59 and $64 per cwt. Prices are expected to drop slightly in the final quarter to between $57 and $62 per cwt.

Gietz says that several factors could affect net returns to Alberta hog producers 1989. "The most important variable for Alberta hog producers in 1989 will be the barley crop and resulting feed prices. Sharply reduced feed costs could bring a return to profitability in the current year," he says.

For more details, or a copy of the quarterly report, contact Ron Gietz in Edmonton at 427-5376

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February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Eat healthy for nutrition month

Weight and health conscious people, who have taken care to cut down calories and get regular exercise, shouldn't forget that nutrition is also part of the health equation.

Aileen Whitmore, provincial foods and nutrition specialist, says nutrition month every March is a chance to make people aware of the importance of a balanced nutritious diet in controlling weight and maintaining health.

This year's nutrition month "healthy eating" theme is a carryover from the "healthy weight in '88" campaign, she says. To eat healthy, Albertans should keep in mind four nutrition recommendations.

"First of all, people should follow Canada's Food Guide and have a nutritionally sound and adequate diet from the food groups," she says.

"A second consideration is reducing calories from fat to only 35 per cent of your total diet. You should also include a source of polyunsaturated fatty acid, linoleic acid, in your diet. It's an essential part of every adult's diet. Butter, milkfat and vegetable oil are common sources.

"Fibre is also extremely important in a healthy diet. Whole grain products, fruits and vegetables are the best sources. As well alcohol, salt and refined sugars should be minimized.

"Finally, you also have to count calories to control or prevent obesity. While counting those calories you have to make sure that you don't take away from the vitamins and minerals you need. Exercise is also key to keeping down weight," she says.

For information about planned local activities or more details about nutrition contact any Alberta Agriculture district home economist.

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Contact: Aileen Whitmore
427-2412

Linda St. Onge
427-2412

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Variability normal part of climate

Climate change and climate variability are distinctly different, but may be confused in the minds of the general public who have been reading and hearing predictions about the greenhouse effect.

Peter Dzikowski, Alberta Agriculture weather specialist, explained the difference between the two concepts for delegates at a recent "Wetlands, Wildlife and Agriculture" conference in Edmonton.

"Lately whenever unusual weather events happen the greenhouse effect has been blamed," he says, "But, the greenhouse effect can't be turned on and off like a switch."

The greenhouse effect isn't something new. It accounts for life on Earth. What is new, is man's influence on the concentration of greenhouse gases--carbon dioxide, methane and chloroflurocarbons. Increasing concentrations of these gases are causing to climate change, but how fast the change will occur is still speculation he says.

Climate change is a long term global process related to the overall balance of energy on the Earth. Climate variability is much more short term. Variability is early frost, hail and drought. All are weather events within observed, recorded and normal weather patterns.

While climate change is not separate from climate variability because variations can point to trends, we shouldn't jump to conclusions about climate change from recent weather occurrences Dzikowski says.

To illustrate, Dzikowski uses the example of relatively warm weather in 1988. "It was as warm as it has been this century, but the temperatures haven't been unprecedented and are still within the range of variability," he says.

Climate is a major risk in agriculture, especially the effect variations can have on production. Dzikowski says farm risk management should include climate information.

(Cont'd)

Variability normal part of climate (cont'd)

"Farmers know their crop production risks better if they include climate information when planning and running their farm. The best planning tool farmers can use for climate variability is past data. Historical climate data still remains the best predictor of climate for the next five to ten years," he says.

In a brief look at a possible much warmer future through climate change, Dzikowski says management of water resources will become even more important.

"A potential climate warming of 4°C could lead to land in northern Alberta having a climate similar to southern Alberta. Land in southern Alberta might have a climate comparable to the midwestern United States, such as Nebraska or Kansas, where agriculture is a strong viable industry," he says.

He points out that this sort of climate change may increase the probability of extreme events, such as drought. Awareness of managing water resources and fine tuning the industry's water use are key both for today and in the future.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Retirement farm style

Retirement, in most people's minds, is associated with getting old and quitting work says a retirement consultant.

"It's not surprising that farmers have some difficulty in relating to this idea of retirement," says Rein Selles, who operates his own company in St. Albert that specializes in retirement training and consulting. He is among 20 speakers who will be at the Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

Selles says the real problem for a farmer is that the word retirement reflects a city view of getting old. In the urban setting, retirement is at or around 65 years of age. Employees, whether by choice or circumstance, cease to work, he says.

For the farmer, retirement is the process of transferring work, management and ownership between generations. It is possible for a farmer to transfer work and some management, but still control land and call himself retired, says Selles. While the transfer is important to all farm families, some farmers put off transfer decisions as long as possible because of family and economic pressures.

Selles will discuss in detail how farmers have successfully moved through the process of retirement and maintained harmony between the generations. He will key on reasons for that success.

Selles is currently president of the Canadian Association of Pre-Retirement Planners. He also teaches at the University of Alberta's department of family studies.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA and the farm business management office in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Agriculture's future in international trading arena

The Canada-United States trade agreement and the continuing General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) will both have an significant impact on the future of Canadian agriculture says Alberta Agriculture's assistant director of trade policy.

Nithi Govindasamy is among more than 20 speakers who will share their expertise at Alberta Agriculture's Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit (MATFP) conference March 5 through 8 at the Kananaskis Lodge.

At the conference, Govindasamy will outline possible impacts of the trade agreement on commodity sectors and share his views on GATT negotiations affecting agriculture.

"The significance of trade for Canadian agriculture is emphasized by the fact that fully 50 per cent of Canadian farm cash receipts annually are generated through the exports of agricultural commodities to all parts of the world. It's not surprising that developments in the international trading arena should be of prime concern to agricultural producers in Canada," says Govindasamy.

The trend towards market orientation of world agricultural policies implies adjustments have to be made in Canadian domestic agricultural policies, so we remain competitive in the global market, he says.

MATFP registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA and the farm business management branch in Olds.

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Contact: Alex Ostapiuk
556-4240

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

American perspectives on buying Canadian

Americans are no different than buyers from anywhere else, they want quality and consistent value at a competitive price when they buy from Canadian companies.

Ben Goehring addressed the topic of why he bought Canadian at one of the sessions of the recent Western Canadian Economic Conference on the Food Industry. The theme of the ninth annual conference was Canadian marketing in the United States.

Goehring is public affairs vice-president of Victor Fine Foods. His northern California company purchases both live hogs and pork from Canada. He says quality tops his list of why buy Canadian, research comes a close second.

Favorable fat lean ratios and eye appeal of Canadian pork makes it attractive he says. Canada's hog industry is one of the world's most efficient and individual breeders are continuing their efforts to even greater efficiencies, he adds.

"Today Canadian pork is leaner than ever. It's a dedication that begins right on your farms. Canada's hogs are bred lean and fed specially designed feeds to promote leanness while maximizing daily rates of gain."

He adds the commitment to quality from the farmer through government agencies add to his company's appreciation of the product they are getting. "As a buyer of Canadian products we appreciate the ongoing commitment of everyone who makes up the Canadian pork industry," he says

Goehring singled out the Record of Performance (ROP) program and disease control as two areas of research that impress him. The ROP program with station testing, home testing and sow productivity testing makes Canada's hog producers one of the world most sophisticated and advanced, he says.

(Cont'd)

American perspectives on buying Canadian (cont'd)

"Disease coming into our countries hog industry is always a concern and we know that through Canada's rigorous national health program involving both on-farm monitoring and strict import control, serious foreign diseases not found in Canada are prevented from entering the country and existing diseases are closely controlled with the goal of eradication," adds Goehring.

His third reason for buying Canadian is competitive pricing. Consistency of product was a key theme in the conference, and Goehring says it is reason number four his company buys Canadian. The final reason he lists is ease of communication.

Goehring says another issue for producers to keep in mind as important to the American buyer and consumer are drug and residues in meat. He says one example of the emphasis this gets, comes from a fast-growing food chain in California. It has an outside agency test their products so consumers shopping there can rest assured what they are buying is wholesome, nutritious and residue free.

Goehring was joined on the topic of why Americans buy Canadian by Ron Lewis of Encore Brokers, a Washington state based food brokerage company. Lewis told conference delegates real opportunities exist in the large foodservice sector of the American food industry.

Lewis says the retail food sector is both intense and expensive to tap. The foodservice is a growing sector with projected sales of $227 billion in 1989. He says providing products for in-store bakeries and delis is one potential sales area. He says that sector has been growing at 15 per cent.

He says Canadians coming into the American market should remember that the market is regional, and to try to capitalize on the trend of fresh.

(Cont'd)

American perspectives on buying Canadian (cont'd)

"If you can come with a product into the United States market where you can say in some way it is fresh--it's a key word," he says. As well as being a key phrase, it's a key selling tool. He says not to be scared by "fresh", it could mean fresh frozen or a fresh approach.

Lewis stressed his six "P's of marketing" to the delegates. All have to be known and used in coming into a new market. The six are: product, packaging, promotion, price, people and pride.

He had a final word on the opportunities and risks of going into the American marketplace with the trade agreement. "There's a risk involved in coming the United States. My opinion is the risk may be the opportunity you may miss by not going into that market."

The conference was co-ordinated by the Rural Education Development Association and sponsored by Alberta Agriculture, Agriculture Canada, the Alberta Cattle Commission, the Alberta Pork Producers Development Corporation, Horne and Pitfield Foods and the University of Alberta department of rural economy and faculty of extension.

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February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Gaining experience through job exchange

A year long job exchange will give Bernie Yakimyshyn and Dave Manchak new challenges and learning opportunities.

Yakimyshyn and Manchak exchanged jobs this month. Yakimyshyn leaves Alberta Agriculture to go to the Department of Career Development and Employment and Manchak has joined Alberta Agriculture's rural services division.

Manchak will take over as the manager of agriculture manpower programs. His area of responsibility include agricultural elements in STEP and PEP programs, Agriculture Work Experience and the Veterinary Work Employment Skills program as well as a number of other specialized programs.

"Deciding to try the exchange was two-fold. I hope to broaden my horizons in government and also enhance my personal skills," says Manchak.

Originally from Lamont, Manchak has also lived in British Columbia. He has a B.A. from the University of Alberta as well as a certificate in personnel administration. He had been at Career Development and Employment for the last four years working in apprenticeship and career services.

Yakimyshyn will be involved in assessing client needs and counselling as well as making client referrals while with the Department of Career Development and Employment. The exchange ends on January 31, 1990.

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Contact: Dave Manchak
427-2405

Bernie Yakimyshyn
427-3722

February 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Agri-News Briefs

## WETLANDS, WILDLIFE AND AGRICULTURE

The next conference to discuss issues, achievements and challenges of integrated water management for wetlands, wildlife and agriculture should probably be held out of the city. That was one conclusion from the recent second "Wetlands, Wildlife and Agriculture" conference. Last year the first conference began the process of bringing together people from diverse backgrounds with a stake in the issue to talk about both issues and solutions. Organizers divided the recent conference into regional discussions about achievements in northern, central and southern Alberta and the challenges that are still faced. A panel discussion concluded the conference. The need for a federal wetlands policy, putting a social value on wetlands, compensation for farmers, public involvement in decision-making, the need for a balance between development and conservation, funding, giving habitat official status equivalent to crops, interdisciplinary research and co-operative venturers were all suggested and discussed. The conference was jointly sponsored by the Canadian Water Resources Association and the Soil and Water Conservation Society with support from a number of government departments including Alberta Agriculture.

## IS CLIMATE CHANGE HERE?

The Alberta Climatological Association annual meeting on March 2 will feature keynote speakers on the question of "climate change--is it here?". The meeting will be held at the Alberta Research Council, Millwoods building, 250 Karl Clark Road, Edmonton. The meeting starts at 8:30 a.m. and runs the whole day. There is no registration fee. For more information, contact Peter Dzikowski at 422-4385.

(Cont'd)

PEA PRODUCTION UPDATE

Pea producers can take advantage of a one-day seminar in Lacombe on March 14 to get the latest information on the pulse crop. Bob Park, Alberta Agriculture supervisor of special crops will discuss varieties and management. Weed control will be addressed by Denise Maurice, supervisor of weed research for Alberta Agriculture. Seeding rates, a market outlook, producer views and the pulse growers association are also on the agenda. The seminar is jointly sponsored by the Lacombe district Alberta Agriculture office and the Central Alberta Pulse Growers. For more information call the Lacombe district office at 782-3301.

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# AGRI-NEWS

March 6, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Elzinga invites applications for 4-H scholarships

The Alberta 4-H Scholarship program has more than $41,000 available to be awarded this year to young Albertans pursuing post-secondary education.

"The basis for a majority of the scholarship awards are 4-H achievement, community involvement and academic standing. Criteria does vary so I encourage all past and present 4-H members to apply," says Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

The 60 scholarships range in value from $100 to $3,000. They are sponsored by individuals, councils, corporations, government, associations and fraternities. Over the years, many people have also contributed to the various 4-H memorial scholarships.

The "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother" scholarship is open for applications from the general public. The scholarship is sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and administered by the 4-H branch. Three $1,500 awards will be given out annually until 1994--in the name of Her Majesty the Queen Mother.

Scholarship application forms will be available this month from regional 4-H offices, district home economists, various rural high schools, post-secondary institutions and the 4-H branch, Alberta Agriculture, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

The application deadline for a majority of the scholarships is July 15. The exceptions are the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) scholarship and the Petro-Canada 4-H Youth Leadership award. Students applying for these awards must do so by June 1.

Anyone wanting further information on Alberta 4-H scholarships or the "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother scholarship" should contact their regional 4-H office or the 4-H branch in Edmonton at 427-2541.

(Cont'd)

Elzinga invites 4-H scholarship applications (cont'd)

Contacts: Bard Haddrell
Excutive Assistant
to the Minister of Agriculture
427-2137

Anita Styba
4-H branch
427-2541

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

Province signs new national red meat stabilization agreement

National tripartite stabilization programs for hogs, sheep and beef cattle now are fully national as all provinces have signed a milestone agreement for the red meat programs.

Speaking on February 24, the day Alberta signed the revised agreement, Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga said having all the provinces involved is something Alberta has wanted for several years.

"The agreement will create greater stability in the nation and competition on an equal basis probably will result in greater production here in the province of Alberta.

"We will have a level playing field and be able to enjoy our natural advantages related to the production of red meat," he said.

The agreement includes a number of amendments to the existing plan which provide for participation by producers in every province. One amendment puts a cap on assistance levels.

The Minister acknowledged the contributions of producer groups in the consultation process. He also noted that modifications have been made to the late entry rules for producers who are not currently enrolled in the program.

Producer participation in each of the stabilization programs is voluntary. Farmers, the provincial and federal governments share equally in program premiums. Payments from the plan are designed to balance over time with the premiums paid into the plan.

The national tripartite plans are designed to moderate farm income losses due to sudden input cost increases or abrupt changes in market prices common in agricultural commodity markets.

(Cont'd)

Province signs new national red meat stabilization agreement (cont'd)

Alberta was one of the original signatories to the red meat stabilization agreements for hogs, lambs and beef cattle, dating back to January, 1986.

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Contact: Bard Haddrell
Executive Assistant
to the Minister
427-2137

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

# New employment program helps farmers

The Farm Employment Program will be a boost for farmers hiring during their peak spring and fall work periods by providing up to $2.50 per hour towards the wages of an employee.

Dave Manchak, manager of farm employment programs for Alberta Agriculture, says the program, recently announced by Ken Kowalski, Career Development and Employment minister, is expected to assist farmers with wages for over 2,200 positions.

"It's a really good program for the farmer. Employment doesn't have to be continuous, but can be for spring seeding and fall harvest. This time frame is long enough farmers could also use it to get caught up with fencing and other need-to-be-done projects," he says.

The funding will be up to a maximum of 704 hours which works out to eight hours a day for one worker for 88 days. Manchak adds there is no limit on the number of workers a farmer can hire, but the program will only provide each farmer funding for 704 hours in total.

Conditions of the program require that the employees must be new workers hired in addition to any regular staff the farmer might have. The employer must pay a worker a minimum of $5/hr, and employers are being encouraged to pay above that minimum rate, says Manchak.

The program starts on April 1, 1989 and runs through March 31, 1990. Funding is on a first-come first-served basis. The application deadline is November 30, 1989. Applications and additional information are available through Career Development and Employment offices, Alberta Agriculture district offices and Agriculture Employment Services offices. Manchak says interested farmers could also call Alberta Career Development and Employment at Zenith 22078 (toll-free), or 427-4740 if they are in the Edmonton area, for further information.

(Cont'd)

New employment program helps farmers (cont'd)

"This new program is in addition to the summer farm element of the STEP program. Farmers will still be eligible for assistance to hire high school students through the summer months," says Manchak. Further details about the STEP program will be available in the spring.

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Contact: Dave Manchak
427-2405

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Strathmore woman wins top quilting honors

Lorraine Stangness of Strathmore captured top honors in the second annual Canada Packers Alberta quilt competition with her flower garden pattern quilt.

Stangness, who qualified for the competition by winning at the Millarville Agricultural Society Fair, received a $900 purchase prize from competition sponsor, Canada Packers, for her first place quilt. The quilt is the second in the company's Alberta collection. It has similar collections in Manitoba and Ontario.

The top three quilts were awarded prizes at the Association of Alberta Agricultural Societies (AAAS) annual awards banquet in Camrose. Alice Luiken of Manning was the second place winner. Her "Elk at Bay" quilt earned her $300 from the AAAS. Luiken's quilt was the first place local winner at the Battle River Agricultural Society Fair.

Last year's winner Ethel Suder, of Winterburn, was awarded third place. She, and her husband Milton, collaborated on a log cabin quilt that won at the Spruce Grove Agricultural Society Fair. They received $200 from the Camrose Regional Exhibition. All the winners received oak quilt racks from Erin-Scott Millwork of Calgary.

There were 19 quilts in the competition. Each quilt qualified by winning at an approved agricultural society hosted competition. The quilts were on display at Duggan Mall in Camrose before and after the awards banquet. A machine quilting display ran through the week with Sherwood Park quilter Gordon Flowers demonstrating quilting skills by putting together a "watch the male" media quilt.

Rules and regulations for the third annual contest are available from agricultural societies and Alberta Agriculture district offices. A list of participating chartered agricultural societies is available from the AAAS at 427-2174. The competition is co-sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the AAAS.

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Contact: Rae Hunter
427-2171

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

# Excellence rewarded in anniversary program

In the last four months, more than 260 Alberta 4-H club members have received special Awards of Excellence recognizing both their club and community achievements.

"The great thing about the program is that it's giving credit to accomplishments at various levels of 4-H achievement. Even younger members can be saluted for their efforts because the bronze award can be earned by members with only three years of 4-H involvement. It's encouraging for these young members, and another good reason to stay involved," says Ted Youck of Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

The 4-H Award of Excellence program was introduced by Alberta Treasury Branches in October, 1988 as part of their 50th anniversary celebrations. The medallion awards are presented for four levels of achievement based on members' accumulated "Yearly Diary" scores. Points are awarded for both 4-H and community activities.

On average, members will have enough points to receive a bronze award in their third year, a silver in their fourth or fifth year and a gold in their sixth or seventh year of 4-H. Platinum is the highest level of achievement. Usually a member must have eight or more years of involvement with 4-H to receive this award.

"To date we've presented 264 of the medallion awards. We're extremely pleased with and proud of our 19 platinum medallion recipients," says Youck.

Bronze awards top the list in numbers awarded. To date 112 of the bronze awards have been earned. Seventy-eight silver awards and 55 gold awards have also be given to deserving 4-Hers.

A member whose last year in 4-H was 1987-88 is eligible to receive an award. For more information about the Award of Excellence contact an Alberta Agriculture district home economist or regional 4-H specialist.

(Cont'd)

Platinum Award of Excellence recipients were honored at the recent Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference. Back row (l.-r.): Teresa Burlet, Cherhill; Jim Schneider, Bow Island; Sheena Kujala, Eckville; Tom Noble, Rimbey; Victor Majeau, Riviere Qui Barre; Michael Bonde, Rocky Mountain House. Middle row: George Lane, Alberta Treasury Branches; Janice Taylor, Chauvin; Terri Dansereau, Millet; Lori Simon, Bow Island; Stacey Johnson, Rimbey; Corinna Kohut, Sherwood Park; Andy Dansereau, Millet; and, Russ Douglas, Alberta Treasury Branches. Front row: Brenda McKinlay, Spruce View; Joan Miller, Wetaskiwin; and, Wendi Anderson, Beaverlodge. Four other recipients received their medallion awards in February. They were: Tammi Krebs, Didsbury, Shelley Meakin, Morinville and Shelly Ann and Karrie Lyn Werenka of Sangudo.



Contact: Ted Youck
422-4444

## Editor's Note

The following is a two-part series on computerizing farm bookkeeping. The articles have been written to stand alone. However, with some editing they could be run as a single story.

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March 6, 1989
For immediate release

Computerizing your farm records
(First in a two-part series)

Farmers, like many other business people, are taking advantage of computers to help with many routine management chores such as record keeping.

"Getting a computer to do some of your chores isn't difficult, but it takes getting used to and can even be frustrating," says Lorne Owen, regional farm economist at Airdrie.

To avoid the pain of a high-tech headache, Owen suggests farmers follow simple guidelines that can make computerized bookkeeping a lot easier.

"Record keeping has to start from a good understanding of debits and credits and how to keep a set of double entry accounting records. The bottom line is that you have to have knowledge about the information you are putting into the computer," he says. Owen recommends a record keeping course if the farmer is unfamiliar with bookkeeping principles before starting a computer record keeping system.

The software choice, or what kind of accounting package is used, is important. Owen says to use a known general ledger accounting package and to have a qualified person help set up the system will save a lot of time in the long run.

"You should also keep your records simple in the first year. Don't try to make radical changes to your recording system at the same time as you're learning how to run your computer. Wait until you're familiar with your system before you try anything too complex. Certainly the computer is beneficial because it has abilities to do complex enterprise analysis and accrual accounting, however, if you're not sure about what you're doing you're not likely to get any benefits," he says.

Keeping efficient records is also critical to both good bookkeeping and less frustrations with the computer. That efficiency starts with a chart of accounts, the list of headings used to record transactions. A good starting point, Owen says, is the previous year's records and year end balance sheet.

(Cont'd)

Computerizing your farm records (cont'd)

"You have to think about the tax and management information you'll need and then develop the most appropriate chart of accounts. Most businesses use 50 to 60 account headings. Avoid using more than 100 headings, unless absolutely necessary.

"Detailed information, such as expenses by machine or purchases by supplier, requires a lot of time to develop and might not be used very often," he says. Owen adds if using an accountant to make sure that your chart of accounts and report are compatible with the accountant's system.

A good cross referencing system is an important step in developing a system. This will save time in locating cheques, deposit slips and other documents that correspond to your accounting entries.

Once you've set up your system accuracy, timeliness and time-saving can all become part of your operation says Owen.

"Remember to record all entries, including opening entries accurately and to the penny. Opening balances should be taken from your last balance sheet. Some people have a tendency to round off these numbers to the nearest dollar, that will cause a problem," reminds Owen.

Bank reconciliation should be done every month when the bank statement arrives. Records will agree with the bank statement and insure greater accuracy.

For more information on setting up a computer record keeping system contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture regional farm economist.

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Contact: Lorne Owen
948-8537

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

Avoid high-tech headaches
(Second in a two-part series)

One sure path to computer frustration is not using your system regularly once you've developed an accounting system says an Alberta Agriculture regional farm economist.

"If you don't enter your records regularly, after several months you'll forget a lot of the instructions and it will be almost like starting from scratch," says Lorne Owen.

"The reason most people are putting their records on computer is to make everything easier. One of the best ways is to use the technology so you're comfortable with it.

"With a good system, a little experience and regular use, your computer can provide you with valuable cost effective information and a real helping hand in record keeping chores," he says.

Farmers shouldn't rush into building complexities into their records he cautions. "It's important to keep your financial records accurate and error free. The more jobs you try to make your record keeping system do, the greater chance you have of creating errors.

"So, if you want to keep track of bushels per acre, pounds gained and other production data--keep it separately from your financial records.

"Even if you are familiar with your computer you should consider transferring financial information to a separate spread sheet program for cost analysis," he says.

Owen has several other recommendations for making computer record keeping easier. If the farmer is keeping accrual records, adding or subtracting farm inventory values from income, it's easiest to use three to five separate change accounts. Owen says these accounts could be farm inventory, accounts payable and accounts receivable.

(Cont'd)

Avoid high-tech headaches (cont'd)

He advises a separate module, or program, from the general ledger if the farmer is keeping track of accounts payable and receivable on a day-by-day basis. Owen also recommends recording capital cost allowances, the allowable depreciation on buildings and equipment for tax purposes, by tax classes rather than by individual item.

Using a computer also requires being careful with what your system allows you to do, he says.

"Be careful if your software lets you change a posted entry. If you need to change an entry, it's better to make a correcting entry. This allows you to go back at a later date and quickly analyze what changes were made and why," he says.

Owen says extra copies of records should be made and stored in a safe place every time records are updated. "Keeping a separate disk on file for each month can save a lot of time and trouble if records are lost or damaged. At a minimum, duplicate copies for the previous two months and a copy of year end closing for each previous year should be on hand."

Many farmers are tempted by the print capabilities of their systems and end up with paper overload says Owen. To avoid confusion, farmers should follow these simple rules.

"Don't print out more information than you need. Destroy all incorrect and extra reports immediately, after several hours it's impossible to tell which report is the right one.

"Usually a printed copy of a financial statement, a record of bank accounts and general ledger transactions are adequate for each month. Once a year a complete printout of account transactions and financial statements should be made. Extra reports are required only when a problem is suspected or if doing some in-depth analysis," he says.

Owen also says a small three ring binder for each year is an ideal and simple storing system for monthly and yearly reports.

A final reminder in record keeping is that personal expenses such as clothes, food, recreation and personal income such as gifts and family allowance aren't business transactions.

(Cont'd)

Avoid high-tech headaches (cont'd)

"These transactions are recorded as owners withdrawals and contributions to your owner equity account. Having a separate business bank account can make it easier to separate business from personal transactions," says Owen.

For more information about how to set up a computer record keeping system talk to a regional farm economist.

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Contact: Lorne Owen
948-8537

March 6, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

## LITTLE ROYAL AT LAKELAND COLLEGE

"Come and see some crowning achievements" is the theme of this year's Little Royal open house at Lakeland College in Vermilion. The focus of the open house March 17 through 19 is student work and accomplishments. Displays, campus tours, an intercollegiate rodeo, a horse show and the first annual Western Canadian judging competition are on the agenda. Some of the displays will feature an historical theme as this year marks the college's 75th anniversary. For more information contact Little Royal co-ordinator Peter Walsh at 853-8582.

## PARTNERS IN GROWTH

Cold weather caused a seminar on farm labor perspectives to be postponed until March 10. Still at the original location of Eckville, the day long seminar includes a keynote address by farm labor consultant Russell Ayers-Berry and a panel discussion with employers, employees and spouses. The goal of the seminar is to help farm employers and employees develop responsible lasting relationships. Productivity, benefits, compensation, motivation and communication will be discussed. The seminar is sponsored by Olds College, Agricultural Employment Services in Red Deer, and Alberta Agriculture district offices in Innisfail, Red Deer, Lacombe and Rocky Mountain House. Application forms and information are available from any of the sponsors.

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## Coming Agriculture Events

Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit 1989
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 5 - 8
Gerde Andres - 556-4277 - Olds

89th Annual Calgary Bull Sale
Agricultural Pavillion, Stampede Park
Calgary, Alberta.....March 5 - 8
Don Stewart or Keith Marrington - 261-0266 - Calgary

Peace Country Classic
Evergreen Park
Grande Prairie..... March 9 - 11
Evergreen Park Office - 532-3279 - Grande Prairie

Canadian Horticulture Council Annual Meeting
Westin Hotel
Ottawa.....March 11 - 15
Danny Dempster - (613)226-4187 - Ottawa

Alberta Agriculture Week.....March 12 - 18

Alberta Dairy Seminar
Kananaskis Lodge
Mt. Allen, Alberta.....March 14 - 17
Val Smyth - 432-2406 - U of A - Edmonton

Little Royal Open House
Lakeland College
Vermilion.....March 17 - 19
Peter Walsh - 853-8582 - Vermilion

Women of Unifarm Annual Convention
Northhill Inn
Red Deer, Alberta.....March 14 - 16
Willow Webb - 451-5912 - Edmonton

Canola Council Annual Convention
Chicago, Illinois.....March 20 - 22
Canola Council of Canada - (204)944-9494 - Winnipeg

Prairie Barley Production Symposium
Holiday Inn
Saskatoon.....March 21 - 22
Bruce Hobin - (306)966-5539 - U of S - Saskatoon

Northlands Western
Agricom
Edmonton.....March 28 - 31
Northlands Agriculture Department - 471-7210 - Edmonton

(Cont'd)

Coming Agriculture Events (cont'd)

Fruit Growers' Society of Alberta Annual Meeting
Northlands Agricom
Edmonton.....April 1
Jim Drabble - 354-8530 - Beaverlodge

Swine Nutrition Conference
Travelodge
Saskatoon.....April 4 - 5
Bruce Hobin - (306)966-5551 - U of S - Saskatoon

Conference Board of Canada 14th Annual Marketing Conference
Hilton International
Toronto.....April 5 - 6
Sandi Bernabo - (613)526-3280 - Ottawa

Sherwood Park and District Trade Fair
Sherwood Park Arena
Sherwood Park.....April 7 - 9
Chamber of Commerce Office - 464-0801 - Sherwood Park

National Soil Conservation Week.....April 10-16
John Hermans - 422-4385 - Edmonton

A.I. and Dairy Herd Management Short Course
Olds College
Olds.....April 17 - 28
Dree Thomson - 556-8281 - Olds

Aggie Days
Agriculture Pavilion, Stampede Park
Calgary.....April 20 - 21
Don Stewart - 261-0313 - Calgary

Calgary Stampede Spring Dairy Classic
Agriculture Pavilion, Stampede Park
Calgary.....April 21 - 22
Don Stewart - 261-0313 - Calgary

Colleges' Agricultural Education Conference
Lethbridge Community College and Agricultural Centre
Lethbridge.....May 10 - 12
John Calpas - 320-3311; Gene Keller - 320-3466 - Lethbridge

Annual Workshop on Farm Management
Canadian Agricultural Economics and Farm Management Society
Transport Institute, University of Manitoba
Winnipeg.....May 25 - 26
Scott Jeffrey - (204)474-9655 - Winnipeg

(Cont'd)

Coming Agriculture Events (cont'd)

4-H on Parade
Agriculture Pavilion, Stampede Park
Calgary.....June 2 - 4
Don Stewart - 261-0313 - Calgary

Canadian Association for Rural Studies Annual Meeting
Laval University
Quebec City.....June 5 - 7
Fran Shaver - (514)689-5435 - Laval

Livestock Judging Clinic
Agriculture Pavilion, Stampede Park
Calgary.....June 5 - 9
Don Stewart - 261-0313 - Calgary

Annual Alberta Institute of Agrologists Conference
Lakeland College
Vermilion.....June 9 - 10
Jim Unterschultz - 853-8109 - Vermilion

Alberta Pork Congress
Western Exposition
Red Deer.....June 13 - 15
Carol Voros - 340-5307 - Red Deer

Livestock Industry Institute Congress
Lexington, Kentucky.....June 20 - 22
Mike Sweet - (816)891-8004 - Kansas City Missouri

Agriculture and Irrigation tour
(Pre-Soil Water Conservation Society conference, see below)
Lethbridge, Taber and Coledale districts.....July 29
John Calpas - 320-3311; Brent Patterson - 381-5880 - Lethbridge

Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference
Convention Centre
Edmonton.....July 30 - August 2
John Hermans or John Toogood - 422-4385 - Edmonton

75th Anniversary Westlock and District Agricultural Fair
Mountie Park
Westlock.....August 17 - 20
Earl Brown - 961-2457 - Vimy; Bob Jones - 349-2780 - Westlock

Reclamation: A Global Perspective
American Society for Surface Mining and Reclamation/Canadian Land Reclamation Association joint meeting
Convention Centre
Calgary.....August 28 - 31
Chris Powter - 427-4147 - Edmonton



AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

## Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in July, August, September or later in 1989? Are there any events omitted in the attached list?
   Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates?

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

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Please return this form by May 26, 1989 to:

Agri-News Editor
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed June 5, 1989.)

# AGRI-NEWS

March 13, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
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Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Food Centre cashes in on consumer trends

Five years ago this month, doors opened to not only a new research and development facility, but to new opportunities for Alberta's food processing companies.

The facility, Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre, in Leduc was created as a crucial link in expanding and diversifying agriculture in the province.

Already Alberta's largest manufacturing industry, food processing and beverage manufacturing, generates almost $5 billion annually. Work at the centre in the last half decade has begun to tap the tremendous potential for the industry's growth both inside and beyond Alberta's borders.

The Centre's appearance on the scene in March 1984 came at a critical time for Alberta food processors to meet consumer demands, changing trends and trade opportunities.

"The last decade has seen distinct and extensive changes," says Dave Schroder, head of the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre.

Shelves wherever you buy your groceries bear out that statement. If you take a minute to think about what is on grocery store shelves today compared to five or ten years ago, then you realize there have been significant changes. Between the juice boxes and "fresh" as grandma used to bake cookies are all sorts of products for microwave ovens. And there's an incredible competition to provide those products to consumers points out Schroder.

"Just looking at the North American food and beverage market, consumers currently reject over 80 per cent of new products," he says. So, improving existing products to retain or takeover market share is a major goal of companies. Honing competitive edges is what the Centre is all about.

(Cont'd)

Food Centre cashes in on consumer trends (cont'd)

The Centre has provided Alberta's food processing industry, from the smallest of new companies to the largest of established companies, with a wide range of services to assist them in bringing new or improved products to the marketplace.

Companies contract the services the centre offers through its product development laboratory, pilot plant and test kitchen facilities. Their usual starting point is with Alberta Agriculture's agri-food and processing development branch. "We're a cog in the wheel of services available to people and companies," says Schroder of the Centre.

Schroder, who has been at the Centre from its beginning, says the years have slid by quickly. Constant activity probably account for time's speedy passage. Usually between 15 and 30 projects are on the go every month. "That's been steady since the day we opened," he says.

The centre's staff evaluate and fine tune a product to enhance its look, taste or price appeal. Often comparisons are made with a successful competitor's product.

Suggestions for improvements can be as simple as packaging. Or, they can be to make the food product thicker, brighter or spicier. The change could also be in how the product is processed, says Schroder.

Schroder says a good example of that kind of project is Krahn's Homestyle Salad Dressing of Calgary. The company wanted to make a spoonable dairy and canola based product attractive to consumers. Centre staff surveyed the major competition and came up with a new formula. The lab reformulation was backed up with processing trials and taste panels. Krahn's has since built a new processing plant.

Another major area of work at the centre is working with new technologies for application in the industry. For the centre it has meant experimenting in satisfying consumers desire for "fresh" and products for use in microwave ovens.

The public's last passion was for natural products. Currently they are also in pursuit of the fresh products and convenience says Schroder. For the processor the challenge has become preserving freshness. For the Centre there has been some pioneering work in modified atmospheric packaging.

(Cont'd)

Food Centre chases in on consumer trends (cont'd)

It all began with sandwiches. Today an Edmonton company will send out sandwiches someone in Newfoundland could eat thirty days from now as fresh, he says. The technology involves barrier bags that stop the flow of gases and maintains an atmosphere that delays staleness and spoiling.

Besides the improved shelf life, the technology has also added to consumer safety. Sandwiches are made in controlled processing plants that must conform to stringent health regulations says Schroder.

Modified atmospheric packaging is also being applied to fresh produce. I&S Produce, of Edmonton, use the technology to supply salad bar materials across Western Canada. Other processors are looking to use the technology for fresh pasta, meat and bakery products says Schroder.

Another exciting area of the Centre's work is providing pilot scale custom processing for test markets. These test market samples have ranged in size from a few hundred cases to tonnes and in destination from Alberta to Japan.

Flexibility and co-operation with the industry is key to how the centre works. That co-operation takes many forms, says Schroder. It could be demonstration of a processing method to the industry, such as mechanical removal of sinew from cheaper meat cuts. Alberta suppliers have used the Centre to demonstrate their products under production conditions to national and international buyers. Centre staff go out to plants to test processing modifications and trouble shoot.

Sharing information and technology also is part of the Centre's role. The Centre's library has a wide variety of trade magazines and journals, industry directories, information files and a data base. The Centre also has run short courses and seminars.

The Centre has a permanent staff of nine but temporary and project workers usually swell the total to between 15 and 20.

Plans are underway for an official 5th anniversary celebration later in the year says Schroder.

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Contact: Dr. Dave Schroder
986-4793

March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Beef forecast optimistic

Beef producers can continue to be optimistic about prices this year if the predictions made by analysts at Accent '89 hold true.

Both supply and demand point to a promising outlook for cattle prices in 1989 Charles Levitt said during his overview of the American market at the annual Alberta farm market outlook conference. Levitt is first vice-president and senior livestock analyst with Shearson Lehman Hutton in Chicago.

Levitt bases his one to two dollar per hundredweight increase in fed steer prices on a three per cent decline in U.S. beef production plus stable, to increasing, retail demand for beef in the U.S.

A Royal Bank official says how much Canadian producers benefit from the improved market will depend on Canada/U.S. exchange rates. The steady devaluation of the Canadian dollar in the ten years between 1976 and 1986 resulted in increased returns for Canadian cattle producers says Bill Gray, manager of product development with the bank's agricultural services department.

"The recent appreciation of the Canadian dollar eroded the price gain in the cattle market which had occurred due to devaluation of our dollar. Future prices will depend on whether the dollar moves up or down against its U.S. counterpart," says Gray.

Gray predicts Alberta fed steer prices will peak in the second quarter at over $90/cwt. Average prices of $86 to $89 that quarter he says will slip to the $82 to $85 range in the third and fourth quarters.

He predicts feeder cattle prices will benefit from improved slaughter prices but says those prices face pressure from possible feed cost increases.

In the long term, Gray says the Canadian cattle industry can expect slow, smooth and sustained strength in a North American industry as a result of a more conservative growth in the U.S. herd.

(Cont'd)

Beef forecast optimistic (cont'd)

Both Gray and Levitt say consumer demand for beef has stabilized after the industry weathered storms and survived. They credit consumer education programs by the industry for stemming beef bashing.

Gray says a return to 1976 Canadian beef consumption levels would hurt the industry. Per capita consumption peaked then at 113 pounds. "We should target remaining within the 80 to 90 pound consumption range in order to ensure that we receive a market price which provides an adequate return," he says.

Levitt had some strong words about subsidies for Alberta beef producers. He says if the National Pork Producers Council's petition against subsidies it perceives in the Canadian pork industry is successful, other American producer groups may follow suit. He encouraged producers "to examine closely" benefits from programs such as national tripartite red meat stabilization to see if they outweigh the possible long term consequences.

He also had some advice for producers on cash market forward contracts which he says may become more common when larger packing houses open later this year in southern Alberta.

The other livestock outlook at the conference was for hogs. An American economist told the conference hog prices should be comparable to last year's levels with Canadian hog prices tracking closely to U.S. ones.

Gene Murra, an extension economist at South Dakota State University, says American cash hog prices should range from $40 to $45 U.S./cwt through March and April. He predicts prices to peak in late spring or early summer at around $50 U.S./cwt. Seasonally increased slaughter will lead to lower prices in the late summer and fall.

Murra says weather and feed prices will play a critical role in how profitable the industry will be in 1989.

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March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Weather markets will affect grain prices

The world wheat price outlook is highly volatile and extremely weather sensitive a Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) official told the annual Alberta farm market outlook conference.

Bob Roehle, director of market analysis, says the current tight supplies of wheat have meant improved prices. Prices for the next crop year will depend on this year's weather.

Canadian producers are expected to plant more wheat to compensate for last year's losses due to drought and also in response to current buoyant prices. Roehle says widespread spring rains are critical for this year's crop.

Wheat output in the five major exporting countries fell to its lowest level in nine years, says Roehle, causing dramatic rises in grain prices. The European Community is the only major exporter expected to export more wheat in 1988-89 than the previous year, cashing in on poor weather conditions in other parts of the globe.

In 1988-89, for the second consecutive year, world wheat consumption is expected to exceed production and further reduce world stocks to critically low levels. Even with favorable weather around the world, stocks probably can't be rebuilt for two or three years says Roehle.

Bumper crops in all five major exporting countries could result in a rise in combined ending stocks of about 20 million tonnes, triggering a 15 to 25 per cent drop in wheat prices. The more likely scenario, says Roehle, is average production with prices holding at current levels.

The president of "Barley World" newsletter predicted world coarse grain prices would also be volatile, especially in the next three to four months. The major contributing factor is dry subsoil moisture conditions across the American corn belt says Garry Chalmers. He adds low carryovers will result in plenty of opportunity for all.

Chalmers also says farmers will have to take a more active part in determining their destiny.

(Cont'd)

Weather markets will affect grain prices (cont'd)

"Over the next year you will have to make astute decisions as to what to plant, when to hedge, or not to hedge and you will have to become more involved politically. For the farmer today it has become much more complicated than just planting and harvesting the crop," says Chalmers citing greater global interdependency.

In a outlook for Canadian quota grains, Gary Storey told Accent '89 of his cautious optimism. "As an economist and farmer, it's nice for a change to look forward to a crop year with some degree of optimism for market prices. Now if it would only rain so we can have some quantity to go along with improved prices," says the University of Saskatchewan agricultural economics professor.

Storey says he expects the government to be cautious when it sets the initial prices for the new crop year because of the potential volatility of the market. He says an Alberta-based initial payment of $170 per tonne for wheat is reasonable, but says it will probably be set closer to $150.

Storey says government caution will extend to barley prices as well, with the Alberta-based initial price probably coming in at around $90 to $100 per tonne.

A more localized outlook for feed grains in Alberta was also on the Accent '89 agenda. Calvin Ausenhaus, president of Didsbury's Chinook Grain Company, says factors from local to international weather as well as CWB quotas, initial and final prices will all have bearing on feed grain prices in the province.

Local feed barley prices won't hit $3/bu unless there's another drought he says. Central Alberta prices could go below $100 per tonne, he adds.

He advises farmers to sell all of their old oat crop to the CWB because it's likely to provide the best prices. If farmers are planting oats because they like this year's prices, he says,"You better hedge it fast."

(Cont'd)

Weather markets will affect grain prices (cont'd)

Oilseed outlooks were also part of the conference. AgriTrends Research associate Stewart Campbell says canola prices will rally along with soybeans into May.

Campbell says he expects there will be opportunities to hedge new crop canola at levels of $7.50/bu. or more. The first opportunity will come with a spring seeding rally. As weather will also be a critical factor in canola prices, other opportunities may come during the summer if there are drought scares. By harvest he says markets are likely to fall to below $6.25 per bushel.

American interest in canola will continue. He says 1989-90 exports to the U.S. have the potential to exceed 300,000 tonnes to crushers located primarily in North Dakota and Minnesota.

Another positive sign for canola producers and processors is the growing recognition of canola oil by nutritionists worldwide. High value, high reward markets can be developed with hard work and astute marketing programs entrenching the oil in both the North American and Japanese consumer's minds. Securing that market could protect Canada's canola industry from wide swings in the international oilseed market.

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March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Higher cereal prices may cut special crop acres

Alberta producers will probably seed fewer acres of alternate crops this year an Alberta Agriculture special crops specialist told a market outlook conference.

Over the past five years the gross value of special crops almost tripled from $37 million to $105 million as farmers turned to more profitable alternatives than the crippling low prices of conventional cereal crops.

"Now, anticipation of higher cereal prices are causing many growers to step back, re-evaluate or scale down their alternate crop enterprises," says Blair Roth.

Roth, one of three panelists who discussed the alternate crop outlook at Accent '89, addressed non-pulse special crops. He says there are some exceptions to this general rule of farmers seeding fewer special crop acres. He picks out mustard, safflower, confection sunflower, corn and canaryseed crops. Alberta producers also grow sugar beets, buckwheat, wild rice and spices.

Roth says he expects seeded mustard acreage to rise by just more than 10,000 acres to 65,000 in 1989-90. He says $7.50/bu contracts for brown mustard will be producers' best bet in 1989.

Safflower acreage should hold at between 7,500 and 10,000 acres and prices should remain firm in 1989, he says. Safflower is a relatively new entry in Alberta's alternative crop sector starting its fifth year of commercial production.

Roth says contract prices for 1989 now range from 12 to 15 cents per pound, down from the 1988 range of 15 to 17 cents. A majority of the safflower grown in the province is for birdseed.

Alberta grown and processed roasted and salted sunflower seeds were produced for the first time in 1988 says Roth. The developing sector here is supported by about 3500 acres in sunflower production. Alberta growers got good returns due to American drought last year Roth says, adding a good crop this year could drop prices slightly.

(Cont'd)

Higher cereal prices may cut special crop acres (cont'd)

Alberta producers will probably plant between 9 and 10,000 acres of grain corn in 1989 says Roth. Prices should be around $3.75/bu.

Alberta's 10,000 acres of canaryseed is a fraction of the 200,000 acres seeded in Saskatchewan Roth says. Contract prices for 1989 are attractive at about 13 to 14 cents per pound. He says that good production levels will probably result in some price declines for canaryseed after harvest. "That means 1989 could be the year to grow under contract," he says.

Also on the panel at the annual Alberta farm outlook conference were Fred Boyce and Brian Clancey. Boyce reviewed forage seeds and Clancey, peas.

"The best prices are behind us and now we are faced with values more in line with long term averages," Boyce, a supervisor of forage seeds for United Grain Growers in Edmonton, told the conference.

He says oversupply in the North American market is the main culprit in falling prices for sweet clover, alsike clover, red clover, alfalfa seed, timothy grass and brome grass.

The star performer in 1988 was creeping red fescue. Growers got about 50 cents per pound for the crop last year. He says this year prices will likely be a nickel on either side of 35 cents.

Clancey, a export grain trader from British Columbia, says fewer acres will probably be seeded to peas this year. Lack of consistent quality has hurt Canadian pea exports. Complicated rules in the European market may hamper exports there and there is a quota for feed peas in Japan. Success in the U.S. market depends on convincing domestic livestock feeders to expand pea usage, he says. That means a clean heavy product with respectable protein levels Clancey says.

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March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Alternatives to summerfallow CARTT projects underway

Methods to reduce tillage in a summerfallow year are the aims of two Southern Alberta projects now underway through funding assistance from the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research Technology Transfer (CARTT) program.

One of the projects is a co-operative venture between the County of Wheatland Agricultural Service Board and CARTT. The board supplied interested farmers with ten litres of 2,4-D for fall application on land slated for summerfallow in 1989.

In this demonstration project, farmers are responsible for applying the herbicide and observing the length of time that the first tillage operation can be delayed in the spring in comparison to land where the herbicide wasn't applied. Direct involvement by farmers makes the demonstration more effective, says Jim Laslo, the agricultural fieldman for the county.

The second project is a conservation fallow project proposed by Ron Wright of Vauxhall. A legume plowdown, a chemical fallow and a reduced tillage fallow will be compared to a conventional fallow.

"One of the greatest challenges on my farm for the last number of years has been controlling wind erosion on summerfallowed land," says Wright. "I realize that maintaining crop residues on the soil surface is one of the best defences against wind erosion."

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

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For immediate release

# Nominations open for 4-H Hall of Fame

If you know of someone who has made an outstanding contribution to 4-H in Alberta, Alberta Agriculture wants to hear from you.

Currently the department's 4-H branch is accepting nominations for the Alberta 4-H Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame honors individuals who have demonstrated significant initiative and leadership and made a positive impact on the 4-H program.

Since 1971, 26 men and women have been honored with this award. The most recent inductees, Georgina Taylor, of Chauvin, and Harold Anderson, of Delacour, became members of the 4-H Hall of Fame in January.

"Nominees may have served the 4-H program as volunteers or professionals," says Ted Youck, 4-H branch head. "Their responsibilities and impact on 4-H, as well as involvement in other community organizations, will be taken into consideration."

Groups and individuals are invited to submit nominations up to the deadline date of May 15, 1989. All of the nominations are reviewed by a selection committee. Individuals chosen for induction will be honored at a banquet and ceremony in January, 1990 during the annual Alberta 4-H Leaders' Conference.

Portraits and biographies of the inductees are displayed at the 4-H Hall of Fame located on the second floor of the J.G. O' Donoghue Building in Edmonton.

Nomination forms are available through Alberta Agriculture district offices, regional 4-H specialists' offices or by contacting the 4-H branch at 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or 422-4444.

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March 13, 1989
For immediate release

# Motor vehicle tax laws change again

Farmers who deduct capital cost allowance on motor vehicles should be happy with a recent amendment simplifying how these costs are claimed says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist.

Douglas Duff, of the farm business management branch in Olds, says Revenue Canada has reversed a decision made last fall to have taxpayers adjust their Class 10 capital cost allowance for each motor vehicle into a new separate individual asset class known as Class 10.1.

A capital cost allowance is the allowable depreciation on buildings and equipment for tax purposes. Income tax regulations set up these allowances by tax class.

Without the amendment, farmers would have had to adjust each car, truck, grain truck and possibly even self-propelled bale wagons into the new separate Class 10.1, says Duff.

"Now with the most recent change, only specific passenger vehicles will be included in the individual asset Class 10.1," says Duff. The Income Tax Act defines a passenger vehicle as an automobile acquired after June 17, 1987. The new regulations require that only passenger vehicles with a cost greater than $20,000 be included in Class 10.1. Any value over $20,000 can't be claimed for depreciation in Class 10.1

As well, adjustments to the Class 10 pool would only be necessary in a 1988 return if a passenger vehicle meeting the definition was purchased.

Taxpayers could be confused about these changes warns Duff because two commonly used income tax guides provide details on how to make adjustments that are no longer necessary. The "Farming Income Tax Guide" and "Business and Professional Income Tax Guide" are outdated by the changes announced on January 24.

(Cont'd)

Motor vehicle tax laws change again (cont'd)

"The area of motor vehicle expenses has been extremely convoluted by the number of proposed changes, and now amendments, to legislation that is only a few months old. Whether taxpayers file their own returns or have their returns prepared, it is important they, or their advisors, know and understand the amendments."

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# AGRI-NEWS

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For immediate release

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March 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Making a safety difference

Handling a common farm fertilizer safely is the focus of a new video that's been added to the Alberta Agriculture video library system.

"Making the Difference, Safe Handling of Anhydrous Ammonia" tells about the benefits of the fertilizer, as well as reviewing the hazards and safety precautions required in handling anhydrous ammonia. Anhydrous ammonia makes up approximately 40 per cent of the nitrogen fertilizer used by Western Canadian farmers.

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga (centre) accepts a copy of a farm safety pop-up from representatives of corporate sponsor Esso Petroleum Canada. Brian Julian (left) public relations manager and John Singer (right) manager of agricultural chemicals make the presentation. They also presented the Minister with a copy of the "Making the Difference, Safe Handling of Anhydrous Ammonia" video.

(Cont'd)

Making a safety difference (cont'd)

"Alberta Agriculture and Esso Petroleum Canada have a mutual interest in ensuring farmers who use anhydrous ammonia, use it safely," says Solomon Kyeremanteng, Alberta Farm Safety program manager. Esso Petroleum produced the 30-minute video.

An accompanying booklet, with the same title as the video, is also available. It includes a short competency test on transporting dangerous goods.

The company is also involved in another public awareness program with Alberta Agriculture. Farm safety pop-ups will soon be making an appearance at health units and rural doctor's offices.

The pop-ups, similar to storybooks that give dimension to features of the story, show a farm yard with potential safety hazards. Ten major causes of farm accidents, from unfenced dugouts to extra riders on tractors, are part of the scene.

Parents with preschoolers and toddlers are the target of the pop-up's safety message. This new awareness program is another link in the department's safety awareness programs. Older children are the focus of the very successful classroom "Child's Guide to Farm Safety" program. Farm fatalities in the age six to ten years category have decreased significantly since that program started a dozen years ago.

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March 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Keep a lookout for coyotes

The coyote population this winter is the highest its been in many years causing producer concerns particularly during calving and lambing.

"Observers frequently report seeing coyotes in groups of six to ten, or more," says John Bourne, regional problem wildlife supervisor.

One reason for increased coyote numbers is a sharp decline in coyote fur pelt sales he says. "Trappers lament trapping or shooting coyotes is not worth the effort or expense for the current average of $5-$10 per pelt."

A relatively short sport hunting season, from November 1 to January 31, and a succession of open, mild winters over the last decade have also contributed to a higher coyote population says Bourne.

The rise in coyote numbers increases the risk of predation he says. "Coyotes will prey, not only on new born and very young animals, but also on adults, particularly females giving birth. This means producers should take extra safety precautions at calving and lambing time," he says.

"Animals should be inspected frequently and brought closer to home, if possible, and placed in well fenced quarters," says Bourne. He adds landowners are allowed to shoot coyotes at any time of year on their own property.

Farmers should also carefully and quickly dispose of all dead livestock, afterbirth and other animal remains. "Coyotes are scavengers and dead animals constitute a major portion of their winter diet," reminds Bourne. Farmers can call local livestock haulers or a rendering plant to remove dead animals. They can also bury or lime cover animal remains to minimize their attraction to coyotes.

For more information about dealing with coyote problems producers should call their municipal Agricultural Service Board fieldman.

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For immediate release

New crop protection "blue book" available

To assist farmers with one of the most expensive and hazardous parts of their business, Alberta Agriculture has been producing a guide for chemicals used in crop protection.

Commonly known as the "blue book", the guide is an in-depth look at use and safety procedures for herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and rodenticides. The 1989 edition--"1989 Guide to Crop Protection, Part 1 Chemicals"--is currently available through Alberta Agriculture district offices and from municipal agricultural fieldmen, says the guide's editor Shaffeek Ali of the crop protection branch.

Selector charts at the back of the guide can be used to choose appropriate pesticides. The chemicals are listed alphabetically by trade names with information on formulations, registered mixes, weeds controlled and suppressed, when to use, suitable crop use and how to apply.

Any new chemical registrations are part of the annual update says Ali. Safety precautions and first aid instructions are also a feature of the guide. This year's back cover reminds farmers to triple rinse containers with instructions on the procedure.

"There are three reasons to triple rinse: saving dollars on chemical, safety for the farmer and safer disposal," he says. In most cases triple rinsing renders metal, plastic and glass containers more than 99 per cent free of residues.

Ali says the guide is produced in co-operation with the agro-chemical industry. Company addresses and phone numbers are listed for farmers if they want further information on any of the products described in the guide.

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For immediate release

# Conserving, not burning peat soils

Recent changes to municipal burning permits have caused farmers to seek alternatives to their traditional approach of developing peat soils.

Common past practice was piling peat and burning the piles after they had dried for two to three years, says Bill Chapman, north west regional crop production specialist.

A one-day meeting March 28 at the Westlock Legion Hall will look at the problem and alternatives. The meeting is co-sponsored by the North West Peat Soils Association (NWPSA), the Municipal District of Westlock Agricultural Service Board and the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Technology Transfer and Research (CARTT).

The keynote speaker is Fred Bently, University of Alberta professor and an internationally recognized soil scientist. He will discuss conserving peat soil from an international, as well as a provincial, perspective. Bently has been an instrumental figure in developing current federal and provincial soil conservation programs. He has also been a longtime advocate of using annual legumes in crop rotations.

Ed Toews, manager of the Manitoba Peatland Farming Association, will look at pending legislation in his province. The association has been active in reviewing the legislative proposals on burning peat soils. He will also talk about the association's 1988 demonstration trials.

Adolf Goettel, head of Alberta Agriculture's soils branch, will present economically feasible alternatives to burning for the local farmer. Clarence Olthuis, chairman of the NWPSA, will outline the association's activities and goals in conservation and improving crop production. Recent deep plowing projects have made progress in conserving organic peat and maintaining crop production. Carol Bettac, area B CARTT co-ordinator, will discuss the CARTT program.

The afternoon features a panel discussion with all of the morning's speakers plus Peter Stasiuk, reeve of the M.D. of Westlock.

(Cont'd)

Conserving, not burning peat soils (cont'd)

The pre-registration deadline for the information seminar is March 22. Registration can also be at the door. For more information contact the Alberta Agriculture Westlock district office at 349-4465.

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March 20, 1989
For immediate release

# Sun's activity part of climate change

A society obsessed with normal and average, lives in a world full of variability and so has a problem understanding climate.

Climatologist Tim Ball also says we have been looking for a scapegoat for the weather of the 1980s after being lulled with 40 years of good weather. The result was hysteria about an impending greenhouse effect.

Greenhouse effect is a bad term to use when talking about increased warming of the earth's atmosphere, he says. "The greenhouse effect has been around for five billion years. Without it the world's average temperature would be -22°C, with it the average temperature is 15°C.

"What we really should be talking about is enhanced greenhouse effect--is there any evidence that man's activities are causing the current warming of the earth's temperature? The answer is we don't know," he says.

Ball was addressing the 12th annual Alberta Agriculture Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference. The University of Winnipeg professor told his listeners we don't have a real understanding of climate. "There is no Darwin of climate," he says alluding to Darwin's encompassing evolution theory.

Just a decade ago, he says, if you asked 30 experts about long term climate changes, they would have said cooler or remain the same. Now they are on the warmer bandwagon.

Ball says he is worried by scientists who have put their climate models in the public eye. He says some models have the oceans only six feet deep, couldn't create the ice age and even the best five models run backwards didn't produce conditions close to what actually occurred.

While Ball says there is a place for the models in the research laboratory, an enormous amount of scientific and social responsibility comes with making those models public. Credibility may be damaged with what Ball calls "crying wolf" to the public. One example is the colder temperatures this winter that started questions about where was the warm greenhouse effect.

(Cont'd)

Sun's activity part of climate change (cont'd)

Ball also says cultural bias in the United States may have contributed to the concern about an enhanced greenhouse effect. He referred to a "Time" magazine article that contributed to the furor about the greenhouse effect. The article said Canadian agriculture would boom with enhanced greenhouse effect. "You and I should be sitting here saying 'C'mon greenhouse'," Ball says.

The only major country of significant size between 30° and 50° latitude is the United States, he notes. The predicted warming trend would have a significant impact on the agricultural producing regions in the U.S. Much of the mid-west would become a dustbowl, for example. Ball points out the region was that dry at least once before in the 1100s when Erik the Red was in Greenland and crops were growing in what is now permafrost.

The American's can't be blamed for their concern or their attitude. They have the most to lose, and have a perspective of what's bad for the U.S. is bad for the world, he says.

So where does pollution build up of greenhouse gases and a depleted ozone layer fit into Ball's theories? He says he isn't an apologist for polluters. The demise of societies in the past has been because fundamental resources, especially soil, have been neglected. He adds clean up is needed but should happen without sensationalized alarms.

He says looking at build up of greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide and methane in particular, alone doesn't give a complete picture of climate change. One of the major factors that he says hasn't been given enough consideration is the relationship our weather has with the sun.

"The sun has been acting up more in the last ten years than we've seen in a 100 years. Yet nobody talks about sun variability as possibly a major cause of ozone variability," he says. Measuring ozone is relatively new going back less than a decade he says. It's difficult from so short a period to come to conclusions about ozone, he adds. A 1987 "Scientific America" magazine article correlated ozone variation with sun variations, as the sun creates earth's ozone. The earth's magnetic field is also felt to play a role in ozone formations, also perhaps accounting for ozone "holes".

(Cont'd)

Sun's activity part of climate change (cont'd)

The sun plays a role in our climate in many ways from the tilt of the earth to sunspot activity he says. The sun isn't a constant and that variability Ball says could account for some of the weather variability on earth.

In the early 1800s there was a period of extreme cold. At the same time there was virtually no sunspot activity. The earth is seeing a warming trend now when there is a lot of sun activity, he says.

Ball also says it is important to look at the history of climate. Through history we can discover that the world has seen warming and cooling periods, he says. In his presentation Ball looked at evidence of the warm and cold periods between 1100 and the present day.

"I would argue you don't understand human history unless you understand climate change," says Ball. A warming trend in the early 1300s eventually contributed to the bubonic plague, he says. The fur trade that opened Canada doesn't make sense unless we have an understanding of how cold in was in the late 1600s in Europe, says Ball. He offers examples of two feet of ice in the Thames in 1683 and ice in the Nile at Cario in 1694. The 1690s were one of the coldest decades on record, he adds.

Ball cites a glacier near a French Alps village as another graphic example of climate change. In a 19th century sketch the glacier stretches between two mountainsides. By 1950 it had virtually disappeared uncovering ruins of ancient Roman lead mines.

He also had a few words on grain prices for his farm audience. The good news is that over the last 700 years the trend is up, he says. "The trick is staying in farming for 700 years, of course that's the length of your mortgage anyway."



AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

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# Predictions for 1989 weather

An American forecaster is predicting normal temperatures and precipitation in Alberta this spring.

Arthur Douglas made his predictions at the recent Alberta Agriculture Managing Agriculture Technology for Profit conference in Kananaskis. At last year's conference his forecast of drought conditions and above normal temperatures were upheld by the weather.

He says no one can be 100 per cent accurate in forecasting, but by using the major tools of sea surface temperature and jet stream pattern recognition, he is able to be between 60 and 65 per cent accurate.

His June through August forecast map shows temperatures in all of southern Alberta and into north east central part of the province as above normal. Normal precipitation is forecast in most of the province except the deep south.

His spring and summer extended forecast is for warmer and drier conditions than normal through much of North America. However, he says, it won't be the excessive heat and severe drought of last year. Temperatures, he says, will be 2°C warmer than normal and precipitation will be 80 to 90 per cent of normal.

Douglas says agriculture wouldn't be stressed by these sorts of conditions alone, but much of North America has low subsoil moisture. Warmer temperatures and less rain will aggravate this problem. "The southern portion of the Prairie provinces could be adversely affected by a combination of persistent warm-dry weather and continued low subsoil moisture," he says.

He also says the driest regions in the United States will be the western corn belt and the high plains. Crop problems could result from lack of good subsoil moisture from previous drought years, plus the anticipated dry spring.

(Cont'd)

Predictions for 1989 weather (cont'd)

Douglas says drought has been recurrent since 1969 with the particular cycle ending in 1988. Last year two systems merged accounting for the widespread nature of the drought. The drought wasn't something that sprung up overnight, but took time to arrive then consolidated he says. He also points out that conditions in 1988 weren't as severe in the United States as those during 1931, 1934, 1936, 1954 or 1956.

He also had an explanation for the colder winter of 1988-89. Strong containment of the jet stream east west around the north pole finally came down in February. That pattern also happened in 1948-49 and 1975-76 he says. Douglas says it's possible to look at those winters and see what happened next, but analogues usually "die" within three months.

He does say odds are that next winter will be cold. Warm winters he says are usually associated with the presence of El Nino, a warming of the equatorial Pacific associated with light winds. Anti-El Nino years are more likely to be cold. Currently the pattern is anti-El Nino.

Douglas is the director of atmospheric sciences at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.

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March 20, 1989
For immediate release

Motivation to be a good farm employer

Most farmers realize success can be found in good production, financial and marketing management, but some stumble with how they handle farm labor.

The people skills required for successful employer-employee relationships is often the forgotten management tool in farm operations, Russ Ayers-Berry told his audience at the recent Alberta Agriculture Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference.

Farmers may restrict their lifestyle or the size of their operation because of the stress they perceive in having employees. Ayers-Berry says if farmers motivate themselves to be good employers, they'll get good workers, save themselves from stress and make their farms operate better. He suggest following ten "golden rules" that have worked for him. Ayers-Berry is a partner in a hog operation near Eckville.

His first rule is an equitable employment benefit package. Hourly or monthly pay isn't as much an issue as overtime and non-taxable benefits.

Giving time off in lieu of overtime pay may be the most realistic option, especially in given the hours worked during peak seasons.

Showing the true value of what your employee is receiving is important both for the worker's self esteem and as a message to the community about the value of farm work. Spelling out benefits with their dollar equivalent totalled in with wages, at least annually, gives a better reflection of earnings.

Housing is another major issue and Ayers-Berry's second rule is to provide good acceptable housing. "Housing plays a big part in the quality of family life," he says. It should be made clear the employer's benefit of having staff on site means a discount on the employee's rent. It's obvious facilities should meet certain quality standards, he says, but just as important is physical location. Privacy, space for vegetable gardens, pets and livestock and distance from barns need to be considered.

(Cont'd)

Motivation to be a good farm employer (cont'd)

"If you are going to compete for first class people as workers, then you should provide first class conditions," he says. This includes providing regular holidays and time off. "As farmers you're not required by law to give paid holidays, but I feel a moral obligation to pay paid holidays," he says.

Employers also have to give consideration to time off for statutory holidays, how they handle calling employees to help on their days off and special arrangements such as a family day off once a month.

Rule number four is to have routines that are reasonable and workable. "Write and regularly revise job descriptions for everyone who works on the farm," says Ayers-Berry. Farmers should ask the employee to write a job description to make sure expectations and understandings are on the same wave length. Jobs and responsibilities may change over time, he says, which makes updating important.

Ayers-Berry also advocates encouraging employees with incentive plans, but he says that can be a dangerous area. Controls are necessary he says, citing his own experience when an incentive package without a limit pushed his swine herd size beyond barn capacity.

Effective communication is very important. "What comes out of your mouth is such a small part of communication," he says. Sitting side by side instead of across a table is the difference between setting up consultation and confrontation. Learning to listen is also key to better communication.

Employees are part of an overall plan, so they should be aware of your goals and you should be aware of their goals he says. Rule number seven for him, is to identify those goals. By sharing goals, the employer can build team spirit by getting feedback and commitment.

Rule eight, says Ayers-Berry, is to accept that on the job safety and health care is the employer's responsibility. "Legally it's not, but morally it's mine," he says.

(Cont'd)

Motivation to be a good farm employer (cont'd)

He says Workers' Compensation Board insurance is expensive, but has advantages if an accident happens. He also suggests looking into private group health care that includes dental care and offers more security to the worker and his family.

An employer can be self destructive by not training employees, so Ayers-Berry's ninth rule is to train employees. Employees can be insecure about their jobs without training and will leave. If the farm employer goes through lots of employees, the tendency is to spend less time training the next one, this feeds the insecurity and keeps a high employee turnover.

His last rules calls for evaluation of the employee and also of the employer. Ayers-Berry suggests regular discussion of employee performance, and also looking inward. The farm operator has to ask himself whether he would work in the situation he is offering to his employees, says Ayers-Berry.



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For immediate release

Avoid pitfalls, set pathways in passing on farm

While most farmers value the idea of their farm continuing in the next generation, few plan for the transfer confused by what retirement will mean.

Farm families have to use planning as a pathway to avoid some of the pitfalls there can be in farm continuity says Rein Selles. The retirement consultant was one of more than 20 speakers at the recent 12th annual Alberta Agriculture Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference.

The difficulty with farm transfer starts with how retirement is defined he says. Farm retirement doesn't fit an urban definition of leaving a job. The exit process from the farm often follow three stages of retiring from work, then management and finally ownership.

These stages can lead to a common pitfall, transferring work and management to the next generation but maintaining control by keeping ownership. Ripples of frustration can go through the whole family, he says.

Attitude is a key says Selles. He researched an Alberta farm community with a common pattern of successful farm continuity. Land was treated a trust for the children, making it much easier to pass on to their stewardship for the next generation, he says.

The message children get about the farm will also be a key to its continuity. If no children stay on the farm, the message to leave is likely coming from the parents, he says.

There are four common ways a farm is transferred, he says. The owner transfers some or all of his property while alive. The owner makes a will and property is transferred according to his wishes after death. There is no will and transfer is handled through probate court according to law. The last alternative is with no intergenerational transfer and the property is sold.

(Cont'd)

Avoid pitfalls, set pathways in passing on farm (cont'd)

Selles says if a farmer wants his children to fight, leave the land or hate him forever, he should withhold transfer, never write a will and not tell his children what he wants.

Some of the other pitfalls may be choosing a successor from among children, an absence of sons, delaying transfer because of economic times, waiting to retire until health forces retirement and a concern about loss of identity.

The first pathway across these pitfalls is open communication. "It won't happen overnight," Selles says, "But it's necessary." Through good communication everyone in the family can have a clear understanding of each other's expectations. This may even mean a family meeting to discuss what is in the parents' wills.

A family farm enterprise means family involvement in decision making. This might mean letting the next generation make mistakes says Selles, but it gives a clear indication of involvement and also avoids conflict.

Early planning is another pathway. It can maximize retirement opportunities. "Fifty five is too late to start planning," he says. "If you fail to plan you fail," he adds.

Selles says some people are reluctant to make and sign a will. People fear that once the will is signed that they will be struck dead As a result, when the estate goes through probate court, "Lawyers and courts will love you and your family will hate you."

You have to take charge early, Selles says, because four things can be expected late in life: children will leave home; retirement will come and it may affect each partner differently; widowhood; and, physical incapacities.

Finally, Selles says goals have to be set about retirement and transfer. Those goals are a framework for planning. He says some American studies showed early retirement and early entry by the son kept young people on the farm and preserved the community as well as the farm.

(Cont'd)

Avoid pitfalls, set pathways in passing on farm (cont'd)

Ideally, retirement should be doing what a person enjoys and should be soon enough the person is still able to do it. If a farmer's idea of retirement is puttering around the yard, then he should do that. But, says Selles he has to remember whose farm he's working on. "As one farmer told me, it's fine to volunteer but it's even better to be asked."



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Strategy and attitude management keys

Farming can be likened to a hazard strewn obstacle course requiring careful management of risks and rewards as the farmer works towards the goal of prosperity.

A determined attitude in approaching those management challenges is critical to reaching the goal, Marty Thorton told Alberta Agriculture's recent Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference. Thorton is vice-president and senior farm manager of the People's Bank in Bloomington, Illinois. The bank has a part in managing over 230 farms in the heart of the American corn belt.

Also crucial is a strategy to reach the goal, he says. Attitude coupled with tools, Thorton calls his ten commandments of management, can put the farmer in a better position to tackle whatever comes his way.

To start: "Know who are and where you are going, or you're like a sailboat without a sail, and a sailboat without a sail goes nowhere," he says. Assessment and evaluation of debt, production, cash flow, business strategy, supplemental income sources and personnel objectives need to be considered he says.

Willingness to change direction is his second commandment, but he says the better rule of thumb is to fine tune rather than overhaul. "Retain proven techniques, but try--dabble--in a new technology every year," he says.

Third, Thorton says it's absolutely imperative to access information and technology. Farmers should go to seminars and conferences and use extension services. Asking questions is important. Knowing where to spend time before spending capital is vital to successful management, he says.

His fourth rule is to set up win-win situations. "See the other guy's perspective when you're negotiating, so he can win too," says Thorton. The result is more positive relationships with employees, suppliers and bankers.

(Cont'd)

Strategy and attitude management keys (cont'd)

He cautions in commandment five not to try to get rich quick, "A short cut is the longest distance between two points."

Doing the little things right mean the big things will follow is commandment number six. Number seven is shooting for maximum economic yields.

Surround yourself with creative competent people is Thorton's eighth management rule. This means not only suppliers and professionals but peers. "Someone who has gone through financial stress might help you to avoid it," he says.

Getting your hands dirty is rule number nine. The dirt doesn't have to be engine grease or grime from a field, it may be doing the books. It's whatever the farmer considers the dirty job that he doesn't like to do. By doing the "dirty job" he gains a better overall understanding and involvement.

The finally commandment is more of warning--don't be complacent.

The obstacle course of farming also requires personal fitness as well as management fitness. Thorton says farmers have to be careful not to ignore physical and spiritual health.

If the farmer does encounter trouble Thorton has five "don'ts" starting with not to upset the applecart. The miracle cure probably will turn into the patent medicine man's snake oil, so don't buy it, he says. Ride out the storm and don't panic he says, but do something. Sometimes paralyzed by stress the tendency is to do nothing. Especially, says Thorton, it's important not to give up.

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For immediate release

# Social strength in family farm

The family farm needs to survive not just for economics, but for the social strength it gives society.

That was the message conference opening speaker, Norman Rebin, gave to participants at the recent 12th annual Alberta Agriculture Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference.

Rebin, Ottawa-based and Blaine Lake Saskatchewan born, says "The real reason the family farm must survive is for quality of life in Canada, the United States and North American society. You are the pivotal element," he told his audience with a farm couples majority.

Farm families are a strong family unit. The strength starts with a shared vision of the farm and way of life that makes a stable marriage, he says. Children feel roots and learn basic lessons about life from the seasons and the cycles of agriculture.

In cities people often feel they work by rote in jobs they fell into he says. Farm life is always busy and has a sense of being important and essential.

Scepticism and sophistication have become the urban way of doing business. Rural integrity and honor need to be injected to replace those qualities he says. "Rural flavor has to crawl into the cities and start the trust again."

While family farms in particular, and agriculture in general, have been experiencing difficult economic times Rebin says there is a "serendipity in hard times". Some people, like his mother, remember the Depression years as their best years, he says.

For Rebin dealing with difficulties are a matter of attitude. A positive attitude can come from applying what he calls the three F's--fun, faith and fervor--of self-sufficiency. Work has to be fun. "It's a good survival tactic knowing despite the circumstances you'd rather be doing what you're doing than anything else," he says. Faith is also a key ingredient for Rebin, plus doing whatever you're doing with passion.

(Cont'd)

Social strength in farm family (cont'd)

Rebin also offered his solutions for family farm survival: divesting and diversifying. Divesting, he says, is a kind of tough love. "We can be sentimental about the size of our tractors or whether there will be a farm here in 50 years. Status is less important than survival." He suggests pooling equipment and other co-operative ventures.

Diversification means not new crops, but entirely different kinds of enterprizes. "Farm homes are more than production units," he says citing success New Zealand farm families have had with guest houses and running rehabilitation seminars in the rural setting. He also points to a thriving cottage industries in Sweden.

Included in his varied business interests is crisis consulting. Rebin is also a visiting professor at University of Ottawa.

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# AGRI-NEWS

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March 27, 1989

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

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April 28 special tripartite stabilization enrollment deadline

April 28 is an important deadline for producers who haven't enrolled in national tripartite red meat stabilization programs and would like to join the plans.

"Each program has specific special provisions, but all have the same April 28, 1989 deadline," says Herb Lock, Alberta administrator of the red meat stabilization plans.

New participants in the national stabilization programs are being given this opportunity to enroll because the program has just become national in scope. Nine of ten Canadian provinces are now signatories in the hog program and eight of ten provinces are participating in the beef and sheep plans.

Because some amendments were made to the programs in the milestone agreement, some details of the specific stabilization programs have changed, he says.

Feeder and slaughter cattle producers will benefit from adoption of a monthly support price calculation. While payments will continue to be made quarterly, if warranted, the support price will be calculated on a monthly basis, says Lock.

"This makes the program far more responsive, especially to the producer who only sells once or twice a year. The monthly calculation means that it will be possible to trigger payments for a particular month when prices may drop below the monthly support price," he says.

Cow-calf producers already enrolled in the program will be recognized for the contributions they have made to the plan. Differential premiums will be established for producers based on the year they first joined, until 1992, when the premiums will be the same for all enrolled producers.

(Cont'd)

April 28 special tripartite stabilization enrollment deadline (cont'd)

Changes to the hog plan will include a new minimum index and weight requirement for tripartite eligibility and a slight increase in the per centage of guaranteed margin.

New agreements for lambs have formalized a new ewe flock option.

"If producers have specific questions about enrollment details or about new details of the tripartite stabilization programs, they should call the centralized support office," Lock says. Producers can call the office toll-free at 1-800-232-9479. If they are in the Edmonton area the number is 422-0137.

Enrollment forms for the beef, hog and lamb national tripartite stabilization programs are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Producer participation in the stabilization plans is voluntary. Farmers, the provincial government and the federal governments share equally in program premiums. Payments to farmers are triggered when average prices fall below set support prices. These payments are designed to balance over time with the premiums paid into the plan.

The national tripartite stabilization plans are designed to moderate farm income losses due to sudden input cost increases or abrupt changes in market prices common in agricultural commodity markets.

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For immediate release

# Check bulls for frostbite

Severe weather conditions in most of Alberta during January and February claimed many bulls as frostbite victims.

"Don't guess about whether your bulls have been affected, make sure," says Laura Rutter, Alberta Agriculture reproductive physiologist. "Bulls of all ages, with or without bedding and shelter, have been afflicted with minor to major degrees of scrotal frostbite."

Rutter says no definitive studies have been done on specific adverse effects of frostbite on breeding soundness. However, she adds, any adverse effect on fertility is likely determined by the severity of the frostbite and the length of time from frostbite injury to start of the breeding season.

Frostbite causes two extremes in temperature within the scrotum. The first extreme is 'supercooling' at the onset of frostbite. The second extreme is 'superheating' as the tissue thaws and inflammation occurs.

"Supercooling is typically of short duration, while superheating usually lasts ten days after the initial injury. The testicles are extremely sensitive to temperature changes. Altered sperm production and abnormal sperm cell structure are the result," says Rutter.

Rutter says producers should check all bulls for frostbite. Blisters and scab formation will be obvious for about three weeks after the frostbite happens. Scabs will fall off in about a month, leaving reddish-pink scar tissue.

If there is evidence of frostbite, the second thing to check is the extent of the injury, she says. "Many bulls frostbite only the tip of the scrotum, about the size of a dime to a quarter. Permanent damage to the testicles is not likely in these mild cases," says Rutter.

If bulls have more extensive injury from frostbite, the chances of permanent injury and delayed fertility are increased. She suggests farmers, or their veterinarian, should check for potential adhesions or scar tissue in the tail of the epididymis, the sperm cords lying on the bottom of the testicles.

(Cont'd)

Check bulls for frostbite (cont'd)

"Damaged testicles will produce abnormal sperm cells which will be obvious in a semen sample. In severe cases, the sperm producing cells in the testicles degenerate or die, and these 'giant cells' will appear in the semen," she says. Rutter adds current recommendations are to wait about 40 days from the initial frostbite before taking a semen sample to determine if sperm cell structure has been permanently affected.

Producers will have to make management decisions based on the severity of frostbite, absence or presence of adhesions and any abnormalities present in the semen test, Rutter says.

She stresses producers should test the breeding soundness of all bulls they plan to use for breeding. Breeding soundness evaluations (BSE) can be done by a qualified veterinarian and should be done as close to the breeding season as feasible.

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# Care needed in buying young calves

Farmers who purchase young dairy calves need to be aware that calves passing through livestock markets are always under stress says an Alberta Agriculture epidemiologist.

Bill Stone says the department did a survey of death loss in calves purchased at auction markets in Alberta last winter (1987-88). The survey showed many of the calves were colostrum (first-milk) deprived. Most suffered from digestive upsets, usually triggered by a change of diet. Often that change was from whole milk to a poor quality milk replacer, he says. Other factors that weakened calves were long hauling distances, starvation, fatigue and exposure to temperature extremes.

"Under these conditions, the immune system of the calf is severely compromised. Consequently, any disease producing agents it comes in contact with are far more likely to produce disease," says Stone, head of the epidemiology section of animal health division.

Veterinarians inspecting animals offered for sale at Alberta livestock markets won't allow calves showing signs of stress or disease to be sold. The veterinarians are also responsible for enforcing the Animal Protection Act where there is evidence of neglect.

"Unfortunately, there is no way to determine by visual inspection if a calf is colostrum deprived or incubating a disease. Calves which are only a week or two old are still extremely vulnerable to disease and digestive disorders and many may develop a disease after passing through the auction market," says Stone.

Ideally calves should be at least four weeks old when purchased. "By this age they can digest non-milk formula replacers. Older calves have also had some time to become immune to disease producing organisms," he says.

Younger calves usually come on the market because most dairy farmers don't want to keep surplus calves longer than seven to ten days.

(Cont'd)

Care needed in buying young calves (cont'd)

Stone suggests buyers try to ascertain the health status of the herd of origin. That's easy if calves are purchased directly from a local herd.

If calves are purchased through a livestock market, Stone says to chose local calves rather than ones that have been brought in from long distances. And if the farm buyer is transporting the calves over any great distance, he should haul them himself.

Even when a producer hauls calves himself, he should be aware fatigue, lack of food, delays due to breakdowns or severe weather conditions will add to the stress on calves, adds Stone.

One of the diseases young calves may be susceptible to is salmonellosis. Stone says 17 cases of salmonellosis in young dairy calves were diagnosed in Alberta veterinary laboratories in 1988. A review shows in 11 cases, or 65 per cent, the calves were born in British Columbia. Five of the remaining six calves passed through a livestock market.

"The stress of passing through a livestock market added to the stress of transportation over long distances is a serious predisposing factor in these cases," says Stone.

Because salmonellosis is also a risk to humans, farmers should pay particular attention to personal hygiene after handling calves. Thorough hand washing, especially before eating any food is particularly important says Stone. He also suggests changing coveralls or outer clothing and using disinfectant on footwear.

Salmonellosis in humans commonly causes diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and loss of appetite. Higher temperatures are a frequent symptom and sometimes headaches occur. Children and elderly people are particularly susceptible to salmonellosis. So are people whose immune systems have been compromised by radiation treatment or other diseases.

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March 27, 1989
For immediate release

# Using airseeders for special crops

How and should airseeders be used to seed speciality crops are common questions the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre is getting as peas, lentils and other speciality crops gain popularity.

Centre manager Rick Atkins says testing special crops isn't a normal part of their test procedures for airseeders, so the Centre doesn't have extensive experience. Plans are to include at least one pulse crop in future testing, he says. "However, our experience to date indicates airseeders can be used effectively to meter and distribute speciality crops such as peas and lentils.

"We recommend producers take time to properly set-up and calibrate their airseeders for that situation," says Atkins.

Speciality crop seeds have to be treated differently than traditional cereal seeds says Atkins. Certain varieties of any speciality crop can be more susceptible to cracking and splitting. This means the seed must be treated very gently by the meter to minimize damage.

"Meters that are less aggressive, for example, external flute or feed wheels would be an advantage when using these types of seeds. So is a distribution system that minimizes the number of headers, bends and corners," he says.

Air velocity and corresponding seed velocity can also be a problem area in using an airseeder for speciality crops. Both velocities are determined by a fan speed setting. The higher the speed, the greater the velocity and the greater the potential for seed damage.

Compounding this factor is that seeding rates for special crops may be two to three times the rate used for cereal crops. High air velocities must be used to prevent overloading and plugging of the system, so a balance has to be found so the system flows freely and grain damage is minimized.

"We recommend that the farmer takes time to optimize the settings for his particular airseeder for the variety of seed he's going to use," says Atkins.

(Cont'd)

Using airseeders for special crops (cont'd)

Grain damage is a common occurrence for all types of seeding says Atkins. Typically the damage rate for hoe drills, press drills and airseeders is less than one per cent.

"We consider that rate acceptable," says Atkins. Damage is measured by the percentage by weight of fines and cracks in the sample. The true damage to the seed in terms of eventual germination may be more, he notes.

"Last fall in trials we did for a manufacturer, we measured the per cent germination before and after the seed had passed through an airseeder metering and distribution system. The difference in germination was between three and four per cent depending on the settings.

"The implication for pulse and other special crops, is even greater reductions can be expected in germination rates if the seed is more susceptible to damage," he says. One way to compensate is by using higher application rates to maintain desired plant populations.

For more information on calibration and use of airseeders contact the Alberta Farm Machinery Research Centre in Lethbridge at 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 1L6 or call 329-1212.

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Contact: Rick Atkins
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# Consider custom work when budgeting

Hiring custom operators can be an economic alternative to machinery ownership says an Alberta Agriculture farm management economist.

"If the equipment is for occasional use, specialized work or for only a short time period, then a custom operator's services might be more financially sound than buying the equipment," says Garth Nickorick.

Each year Alberta Agriculture surveys and compiles custom operator rates. "These rates can be a practical tool in negotiating a suitable rate for a farmer's particular job," he says.

Custom services can start with cultivating at a range between $3.50 and $5.50/ac. Rates for other spring work include harrowing at $1.75 to $2.50/ac., granular fertilizer application at $2.75 to $3/ac., and herbicide application at $2.50 to $3/ac.

Mowing and conditioning hay rates start at $7/ac. up to $10/ac. Square baling rates in the survey were between 30 and 40 cents per bale. Stacking and hauling ranged between 20 and 30 cents per bale.

Harvesting rates are more expensive. Swathing rates ranged between $4.50 and $6/ac. and combining between $12 and $14/ac. Round baling rates ranged between $5 and $6 per bale with stacking and hauling at $1 to $2 per bale.

The 1989 annual survey summary will be available in early April from Alberta Agriculture district offices or from the Publications Office, Information Services, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 5T6.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
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For immediate release

# Custom cattle service rates

A survey of custom cattle service rates has recently been completed by Alberta Agriculture.

Customer operators throughout the province were contacted to determine the range of rates offered for fencing, corral cleaning, livestock hauling and cattle feeding says Garth Nickorick, farm management economist in Olds. The survey results can be used as a guide in negotiating and budgeting, he says.

Yardage rates for backgrounding calves, calves to finish and yearlings to finish all fell within 11 to 16 cents per day range. The common rate for backgrounding calves (550 to 750 lbs) and calves to finish (550 to 1150 lbs) was between 12 and 15 cents. Yearlings to finish (750 to 1150 lbs) most commonly ranged between 13 and 15 cents per day.

Livestock hauling rates varied with distance hauled and type of transport. For example, a possum belly liner going between 50 and 100 miles would cost between $2.50 and $3.25 per loaded mile. The same distance ranged between $2.40 and $2.75 per loaded mile for a straightliner and $2 and $2.25 in a body truck.

Type of equipment usually determines the rate range for custom corral cleaning. The rate for loaders, three spreaders and four to five operators fell in a range between $150 and $190 per hour. The rate for one loader, two spreaders and two to three operators was between $100 and $145 per hour in the survey.

Fencing rates for three or four wire, labor and equipment ranged between $1100 and $1400 per mile. Post pounding, with equipment and two operators, ranged between $40 and $55 per hour. Fence removal rates ranged between $400 and $600 per hour.

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For immediate release

# Wild about wild rice

Six years ago there was no wild rice production in Alberta, last year producers harvested more than 50,000 pounds of the speciality crop.

To provide fledgling and prospective growers with a better understanding of wild rice production, processing and marketing, Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Wild Rice Growers Association is sponsoring a provincial wild rice symposium.

The symposium is scheduled for April 1 in Lac La Biche at the Alberta Vocational Centre. Speakers from Alberta, Manitoba and Minnesota will be sharing their expertise.

Ervine Olke, chairman of extension services at University of Minnesota, will discuss paddy and lake wild rice production in the U.S. Harold Cosbo, a Minnesota producer who operates his own processing plant and heads a co-operative marketing group, will talk about his operation, processing and marketing. A Manitoba producer, Dave Buck, will discuss production, processing and marketing from the Canadian viewpoint.

As well as the featured speakers, the symposium will have machinery, food and marketing displays.

Historically, the wild rice industry is slow to develop says David Burdek, manager of of the Alberta Rice Growers Association. Wild rice lakes must be test seeded to determine their production potential before commercial seeding can start.

"With successful stands now established on numerous lakes across the province, the provincial harvest could easily quadruple over the next two years.

"Increased production will put a strain on wild rice growers who currently sell the majority of their crop into the seed market. With this market quickly saturating, wild rice farmers will have to seek other outlets for their crop," says Burdek.

(Cont'd)

Wild about wild rice (cont'd)

Alberta producers have sent some of their crop to Saskatchewan and Manitoba for processing. Marketing efforts are underway to sell the processed product in the province. The association has been involved in some test marketing, says Burdek. "We hope to expand our activities in 1989 to make wild rice more available to the average consumer."

Lac La Biche area producers have been on the leading edge of growing wild rice successfully. Last year approximately 60 per cent of Alberta's total production of 50,000 pounds was harvested in the area, says Harvey Yoder, district agriculturist in Lac La Biche.

"Producers have been trying wild rice in the area for the last five years. Successful stands have been established north west of Lac La Biche in the Spruce Valley, Atmore and Athabasca areas," he says.

Wild rice grows best in clean, clear water that is six inches to four feet in depth. Lakes that provide some water exchange through the summer and have an organic, murky bottom seem to support the best stands.

In the Lac La Biche area, most wild rice is seeded in the fall. The seed is broadcast on the surface of the water at a rate of 25 to 30 lbs/ac. The plump rice kernels sink and overwinter in the lake's mud bottom. Germination usually takes place by mid-May and seedlings can be seen from the water surface by mid-June. The wild rice is usually ready to harvest at the last week of August. Some Athabasca area growers have had yields in excess of 300 lbs/ac.

For more information about the symposium, or to register, contact the Alberta Agriculture district office in Lac La Biche at 623-5218.

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## Editor's Note

The following two articles were written in support of National Soil Conservation Week, April 10-16. This week is designated annually to raise awareness of the importance of soil conservation practices. For more information contact John Hermans, Alberta Agriculture Conservation and Development Branch, at 422-4385.

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March 27, 1989
For immediate release

# CARTT advances conservation

Conservation tillage workshops, legume plowdown demonstrations, reduced tillage projects and tours of practiced conservation farming are becoming common across the province.

Credit for the increase in these conservation activities can be taken in part by the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research Technology (CARTT). CARTT is a joint federal and provincial government initiative committed to halting or reversing the trend of soil degradation, says Russel Horvey, CARTT's program co-ordinator.

"CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production," says Horvey. To meet that objective CARTT's $4 million budget will fund demonstrations and awareness/technology transfer activities until March 31, 1993.

Demonstrations include any conservation farming practices that better protect soil from erosion and or degradation, he says. An example is the number of fall-applied herbicide to reduce tillage projects that got underway last fall. Approximately 60 sites, representing a cross section of Alberta's major soil and climate zones are part of projects conducted by producers, Agricultural Service Boards and research groups.

Other possible conservation farming practices demonstrations include: direct seeding to reduce tillage, the use of blade cultivators to leave more crop residue on the surface, legume plowdown to increase organic matter and using perennial forages to reduce soil salinization.

"There are many more examples of cost effective conservation farming practices that need to be more broadly demonstrated. CARTT funding is available to encourage these types of farming practices demonstrations," says Horvey,

(Cont'd)

CARTT advances conservation (cont'd)

Awareness/technology transfer activities include soil conservation meetings, conferences, tours and field days. The Soil and Water Conservation Society, for example, is developing a booklet about soil and water conservation in Alberta.

Horvey says there is a great deal of proven and practical soil conservation technology available. "Any activity that might accelerate the transfer and or acceptance of this technology is something CARTT would like to encourage."

CARTT application forms are available from Agricultural Service Board fieldmen, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturists and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) offices.

Information is also available from CARTT area co-ordinators. Area A includes the south and south central regions running from the U.S. border to the Olds/Three Hills/Hanna districts. Area B includes the north central, north east and north west agriculture regions running from Red Deer north to the Barrhead/Athabasca/Lac La Biche districts and from the Saskatchewan border west to the foothills. Area C is the Peace River region.

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Editor's note

George Markle is the fourth generation to farm the land homesteaded by his great grandfather northeast of Claresholm. He has been farmer for the two decades since he finished high school. He says he grew up with conservation, but has taken it much more seriously in the last ten years. Five years ago, Markle and his father developed their own air drill to fit in with their minimum tillage operations. In the following column Markle describes his practices and beliefs for National Soil Conservation Week.

## Minimum tillage viable alternative

By George Markle

From an operational standpoint, minimum tillage conservation farming is a very viable alternative to traditional crop summerfallow rotations.

We have also found the system we use is a viable alternative from an economic standpoint. As long as we stay relatively cost efficient, at least we have a chance to grow a good crop every year. Granted, there will be some poorer years too, but when you summerfallow you'd better have a good crop every time, because you don't have any crop half of the time.

Conservation farming, to me, means minimum tillage and continuous cropping. Conservation farming doesn't require enormous outlays for specialized equipment. We apply our fertilizer and pre-emergent herbicides when doing the first tillage operation in the spring.

I'd like to explain our operation step by step. The 3,000 acres we farm is in six separate parcels that span twelve miles. Because of this, we must have capacity and "wing up" mobility. Most of our land is worked once prior to seeding and we start our field work on or about May 1. We cultivate, fertilize and pack in one operation as early as we can in the spring. We use the airseeder unit, deep tillage cultivator and coil packers.

(Cont'd)

Minimum tillage viable alternative (cont'd)

At that time, we apply 34-17-0 granular fertilizer at 150 pounds per acre with the airseeder. This gives 51 pounds nitrogen and 25 pound phosphorous. Coil packers hitched behind the cultivator reset the residue and firm the soil to hold moisture in.

I really want to emphasize the importance of packing as part of the initial tillage operation. It's a simple fact: packing conserves moisture!

The seeding operation is just that, no starter fertilizer is applied with the seed. This has the added advantage of only needing one truck and drill fill which speeds refill time and helps when moving to another field.

We straight cut all of our crops because they are usually short, especially the barley. Straight combining really saves a lot more grain than swathing a short crop.

I don't think enough emphasis can be placed on straw management, and harvest time is when to do it. Make sure your combine chopper is cutting and spreading evenly. Thick rows of poorly spread residue are no picnic next spring.

Snow trapping is also important. I think our fall stubble catches more snow and saves more moisture than summerfallow. A good example came in 1984 when we straight cut our winter wheat. It was a good stand and we cut it really high. The standing stubble was 12 to 14 inches tall. In the next field, we had barley stubble that we had to cut very short.

In the spring of 1985 when we were cultivating and fertilizing the barley stubble, we couldn't drive across the winter wheat stubble with a 4-wheel drive truck. The tall stubble naturally caught more snow, but also I think significantly lowered the wind velocity at ground level so evaporation was much less.

When considering using soil conservation techniques on your farm you just have to remember one thing: Your land is like cash, don't blow it.



AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

# AGRI-NEWS

April 3, 1989

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For immediate release

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Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

April 3, 1989
For immediate release

# Be prepared to capture snowmelt

Snow, cold temperatures and lots of new dugouts have set the scene for a concentrated effort to capture spring snowmelt.

"The longer snowmelt is delayed, the more likely that it will happen with a bang," says Neil MacAlpine, a farm water management engineer with Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch.

Although most areas across the province had more snow this year than in recent years, MacAlpine points out that even these amounts are below the long term normals. "Since a lack of runoff last year created a shortage in farm water supplies, farmers need to be especially vigilant in making sure the maximum amount of runoff is delivered to their dugouts this spring," he says.

"New dugouts should get special attention since they will need the most water to get full. And if snowmelt is rapid, there is little time to remove blockages that may keep surface water from getting into dugouts.

"The lesson from the 1988 drought was to capture water when you can. With the most snow around in recent memory, some timely work this spring will guarantee a good supply of water for 1989, and for dugouts with two year capacity, hopefully for 1990 as well," he says.

The key is making sure field ditches, natural runways and culverts that drain into the farm dugouts work as efficiently as possible to deliver the runoff. Temporary ice dams from snowdrifts and blocked culverts can send water past or away from the dugout.

MacAlpine says there are some simple options to temporarily divert water such as pumping and constructing dams in streams or water courses. Square bales can be used for dams with their upstream face covered in a plastic sheet.

"Farmers who believe that these extraordinary measures are necessary to divert water from sloughs, creeks or watercourses must contact their nearest Alberta Environment regional office," he says. Even if diversions are temporary, permission is required by law.

(Cont'd)

Be prepared to capture snowmelt (cont'd)

Alberta Environment water resources administration staff offer technical assistance as well as information on whether approval would be required for a particular project. These offices are located in Peace River (624-6167), Edmonton (427-5296), Red Deer (340-5310), Calgary (297-6582) and Lethbridge (381-5399).

Farmers who anticipate they'll need to pump water to fill their dugouts should be lining up equipment before the snowmelt says MacAlpine. Equipment can be rented through private companies. Alberta Agriculture also provides dugout filling equipment on a first-come, first-served basis. District agriculturists can provide more information on this service.

"If there is a sudden melt, using the government's equipment will be the least flexible in timely capture because of the high demand for the equipment," he cautions.

Although farmstead dugouts, especially for large livestock operations, will be the focus for most water capture efforts, pasture dugouts shouldn't be forgotten, he says.

"Cattle operators want to avoid a situation where their pasture has lots of grass but no water supply, and hauling water is very time consuming work," says MacAlpine.

For more information on dugout water capture contact MacAlpine in Edmonton at 422-4385, Brian West, engineering services in Red Deer at 340-5322 or any Alberta Agriculture regional engineer or technologist.

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Contact: Neil MacApline
422-4385

April 3, 1989
For immediate release

Conservation projects take off

Farmers, Agriculture Service Boards (ASB) and producer organizations are all taking advantage of the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) program to fund soil and water conservation projects in north central and eastern Alberta.

"CARTT has received numerous project proposals from individuals and groups in this part of the province. Many of the applications have been approved and have gone ahead," says area B co-ordinator Carol Bettac.

The province is divided into three areas in the CARTT program. Bettac co-ordinates activities in area B. It includes the north central, north east and north west agriculture regions running from Red Deer north to the Barrhead, Athabasca and Lac La Biche districts and from the Saskatchewan border west to the foothills.

Viking area farmer Frank Vitek will be demonstrating the effectiveness of various forage crops in controlling soil salinity. He will be working in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA) staff, says Bettac.

Vitek will seed alfalfa and salt tolerant grasses in saline areas identified by the Dryland Salinity Investigation Service study of 1986. The establishment success of the forage varieties will be monitored and evaluated. Ground water levels will also be monitored to see if vegetation has any affect on its level.

The County of Flagstaff plans to develop and implement a comprehensive on-farm soil conservation plan to increase the awareness of soil conservation needs and practices.

"Their plan is really ambitious," says Bettac. "Ten individual farm conservation plans will be initiated with soil conservation practices given a very high profile. The county will introduce a road allowance access policy emphasizing decreased brushing of road allowances and increased grassing of those areas.

(Cont'd)

Conservation projects take off (cont'd)

"A zero-till drill will be provided to seed land susceptible to erosion. Shelterbelts will be established and a salinity extension program will also be started," she says.

Demonstrating fall tillage alternatives by comparing the use of fall-applied herbicides with conventional tillage is a County of Stettler ASB project.

Banvel, 2,4-D LV Ester 600 and Roundup were applied to stubble last fall. This practice can reduce tillage operations in the spring and promotes soil and water conservation practices by maintaining crop residue. Crop yield information will be collected next fall to compare and economically evaluate the difference between the sprayed plots and the tilled control plot.

The Battle River Applied Research Association (BRARA) will demonstrate production of fall seeded annual crops in east central Alberta. By providing ground cover in the fall and spring--the two most erosion prone seasons--fall seeded crops can reduce soil erosion.

Plot sites in the counties of Paintearth, Stettler and Camrose have been chosen for the project. Its objective is determining the fall crop varieties best suited to the climatic conditions in each area.

"An agronomic analysis of the varieties is also part of the project," says Bettac. Soil fertility, soil moisture, soil temperature, precipitation, snow cover and crop production will be actively monitored comparing fallow and standing stubble situations over a three-year period.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

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Contact: Carol Bettac
CARTT area B co-orindator
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# Ethics and family farm survival

Family farms are special and too often farmers don't know what they have or take time to step back and look at what they do.

American author and professor Gary Comstock identifies family farming as contributing to great literature, supporting democracy, saving neighbourhoods and families and continuing commitment to the preservation of resources All of these factors contribute to moral arguments that can be made about saving the family farm, arguments he summarized in his book "Is There a Moral Obligation to Save the Family Farm?".

Comstock told the recent Alberta Agriculture Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit conference he is disturbed by the trend in the United States towards a bimodal system of only superfarms and some very small farms that are little more than rural residences.

Comstock says one of the greatest tragedies of our generation may be the demise of family farms, a tragedy compounded by the difficulty in pinning down why, should and how that trend be reversed. He discussed these issues from an ethical perspective.

Three years ago Comstock organized a conference on family farm survival and followed that with his book. The book offers expert points of view covering economics, sociology, ethics, history, philosophy and theology. From those viewpoints Comstock found four moral arguments put forward about saving the family farm.

However, Comstock says those arguments from emotion, efficiency, stewardship and cultural identity all have weaknesses. Emotional arguments can't bear the whole burden, nor do we have a moral obligation to save everyone who is in financial difficulty he says. Efficiency isn't confined to family farms, nor does the efficiency argument consider effort. Family farms don't have the monopoly on good farming practices and to believe the cultural identity argument one has to also believe democracy has been eroding as people have left the land, he says.

(Cont'd)

Ethics and family farm survival (cont'd)

He puts forward his own argument he says combines the strength of the other arguments. He calls it an argument from responsibility and summarizes it by quoting the final paragraph of his book: "To the extent that family farms help us fulfil our duties to one another, to unborn generations, and to God's created world, it is our duty to help them survive."

Comstock says the family farm is the most political viable way of meeting those objectives, or obligations, of respecting the past, preserving social strengths and arrangements and environmental conservation.

While an economic bite has provided the crunch for many family farms in recent times, Comstock is careful to point out his arguments are ethical ones. Ethics, he describes, are a peaceful way to settle conflict. Economics however also have a place in the debate, he says, because there are also good economic reasons for family farms.

Comstock is currently associated with the Western Rural Development Centre of Oregon State University in Corvallis, Oregon.

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## Editor's Note

The following articles were written in support of National Soil Conservation Week, April 10-16. This week is designated annually to raise awareness of the importance of soil conservation practices. For more information contact John Hermans, Alberta Agriculture Conservation and Development Branch, at 422-4385.

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April 3, 1989
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Editor's note

Annalee Hearn's passion for soil was nurtured by her father. He vowed after dust storms in the early 1960's never to let his top soil blow away again. He invented innovations for his equipment and used soil conservation techniques. She learned then that soil conservation was a family affair. She, her husband Bryan, and their three sons have carried on the tradition. In the following column she offers her observations about important partnerships in soil conservation and her continuing crusade for better soil management.

## Soil conservation is a family affair

By Annalee Hearn

Soil conservation is not an essential part of every farm wife and mother's perspective, but it should be.

The best farmers have a love affair with their land and this love obligates them to do all that is required to ensure healthy productive land. The bond between farm husband and wife can be strengthened through the sharing of the love for their land.

Land requires the same parental nurturing as children: care, nutrition and attention. Soil degradation, salinity problems, wind and water erosion and low organic matter are childhood diseases that may be fatal to the well being and future of farmland.

Our "eldest child" is our farm in southern Alberta near Etzikom. After 14 years of tender loving care conservation style, that land is well on its way to success. In fact, many people have already forgotten the poor condition it was in when it was purchased.

We are going to move to central Alberta this fall and take on another challenge. Our new land is about to have parents whose belief in soil conservation has been strengthened by our success in southern Alberta.

(Cont'd)

Soil conservation a family affair (cont'd)

We are dismayed by the practices of burning stubble, clearing excessive trees, recreational cultivation and half crop/half summerfallow crop rotations. Those practices won't lead central Alberta into a role as guardian of the soil.

I am the source of our family's love for the land. I brought this love to our land from my roots, my parents' farm near Champion. As part of me, my husband shared that love and now has his own romance with the soil. I have watched with pride as he shared his conviction with other farmers across the Prairies.

I know with certainty that if wives and children aren't included in soil conservation, then its success will be minimal. Soil conservation is a family love affair.

The level of commitment which each farmer is willing to give will ultimately depend on the support and understanding of his spouse. Soil can be portrayed as child or lover. What farm wife can resist helping a sick child, or keeping her marriage healthy by sharing hubby's interest?

The future rests with the children who grow up in land loving homes. Soil conservation is the pet among topics I teach. Students from homes that already love the soil understand my commitment and concern. The other students find "teacher's pet" an irritation. But like the grain of sand that irritates the oyster, perhaps someday a soil conservation pearl will grow.

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April 3, 1989
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## Association links farmers to conservation technology

Research has leveled mountains to molehill proportions, but part of the battle is getting research results out to the people who want to tackle the mountain.

The Smoky Applied Research and Demonstration Association (SARDA) is the link between soil conservation research and technology and farmers in the Municipal District of Smoky River.

The association became a registered society in 1986 and has been taking on a variety of technology transfer projects from its inception, says co-ordinator Rene Labbe.

"The main purpose of SARDA is to expedite the transfer of ideas and technology from industry and scientific research institutions to local producers. We had to find ways to accomplish that," says Labbe.

One way SARDA promotes technology transfer is by organizing information meetings where specialists make presentations on production, marketing or political topics he says.

Because the old maxim about a picture's worth exceeding those of words, SARDA is also actively involved in on-farm demonstrations that test or demonstrate new agricultural products and sound production practices. Over the past two years SARDA demonstrations have included: alfalfa fertilization; barley, oat, pea and wheat varieties; legume plowdown; pasture fertilization and rotational grazing; intensive crop management; subsoiling with or without topsoil amendments; and, zero tillage.

"Most project sites are public and a guided tour of sites is given every July. Project results are sent out to SARDA members in a annual report and highlights of some projects are published in local news columns," he says.

One of SARDA's most recent projects has been a conservation tillage demonstration. It started at one site in 1988, and Labbe says SARDA hopes to get five more sites on track during 1989.

(Cont'd)

Association links farmers to conservation technology (cont'd)

Their zero tillage project site did yield results says Labbe. "It demonstrated the importance of early weed control and good seed placement. Both were problems. We observed, while touring project sites in the Peace River Region, that even straw spreading and control of perennial weeds are important for zero tillage."

This project, like all of SARDA's other projects, seeks to educate and inform the producers of the area. The producers, says Labbe, have a bottom line they are looking for in the projects. "The main concern of the local farmers is how the economics of crop production compare under different conservation tillage systems. I suppose that the success of the conservation tillage projects hinges on their ability to transmit the 'conservation pays' message."

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For immediate release

# Pilot project develops individual farm conservation plans

Municipal governments in rural Alberta may soon have a new tool to aid their efforts in selling soil conservation to the farmers within their boundaries.

The County of Flagstaff is currently involved in a pilot project to develop a strategy for individualizing soil conservation plans says Tim Dietzler, agricultural fieldman for the county.

Dietzler says the county had been wrestling with how best to get information and equipment to farmers and hit on the idea of tailoring plans for individual farmers almost two years ago.

"Our local Agricultural Service Board has grappled with the soil conservation issue for years. By late 1987, it was apparent that even though our present methods of demonstration and extension--chem-fallow and reduced tillage, direct seed drill rental program, 'green manure plowdown' and fall and winter crops--were of some value, they weren't going far enough.

"Field shelterbelt orders had dropped off by 300 per cent and removal of trees and brush on even highly erodible land continued. The winter and spring of '87-'88 was disastrous for wind erosion in our area," he says.

Field surveys showed that up to 115,000 acres in the eastern half of the county alone were moderately to severely eroded by wind during the winter of 1987-88 and the spring of 1988. The land was also effected by water erosion from downpours in June and July, he adds.

The pilot project began in the aftermath of the water and wind damage and within the framework of the new Soil Conservation Act, says Dietzler. First, the Board set long-range goals. The most important, he says, was to initiate individual soil conservation plans for the county's farmers.

(Cont'd)

Pilot project develops individual farm conservation plans (cont'd)

"The plans are a way of putting together all the applicable soil conservation techniques and options into one integrated package for an individual farmer. Practices would be recommended that would keep soil losses to a minimum," he says. Optional techniques would be offered if the economics dictate, he adds.

"For example, on a steep sandy piece of land, establishing a perennial forage might be recommended, but permanent grassed waterways, stubble maintained over winter and minimum spring tillage might be acceptable alternatives," he says.

Dietzler says most of the tools needed to develop the plans are already available. Those tools include soil surveys, aerial photographs, the expertise of local agricultural fieldmen and district agriculturists, specialist advice and the experience and ability of local farmers. The farmers, he says, are the key to developing effective soil conservation plans for their own farms.

Part of the pilot project has been making plans for two farmers in the county. Dieztler says the plans are nearly complete. "Both farmers have been involved in the process and contributed greatly. They know the challenges they face in maintaining long-term soil productivity while facing the financial instability of the recent times. Perhaps soil conservation planning can be an effective tool in meeting those challenges," he says.

Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration and the Alberta Research Council have been an instrumental part of the pilot project. The project has also received funding from the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT).

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For immediate release

Conservation camper takes on challenge

"Teach your children well" could be described as the mandate behind the annual Alberta 4-H conservation camp.

This July will mark the camp's 24th year. About 60 young Albertans will spend a week learning about soil, water, range, forest, fish and wildlife conservation. With the lessons of the week behind them the delegates will be encouraged to take the conservation message home and raise awareness in their own communities.

At the 1988 camp Laura Pimm, then 16, of Grimshaw was awarded the Grant MacEwan Conservation Award for her efforts in spreading the conservation message. The award has been given annually since 1975 to the camper who best promotes conservation in the year after they attend the camp. MacEwan, a former Alberta lieutenant-governor, has championed conservation throughout his life.

Pimm's first step to increase awareness was organizing a conservation information night in her community. She was aided by John Heinonen, the local Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PRFA) soil conservationist. Heinonen spoke about zero-tillage as a method of conservation and its benefits.

Pimm spoke about conservation herself. Her 4-H speech was on that topic and after winning at her club speaking level she also presented the speech at the district level. She competed in a regional school speech competition and took first place for her grade level.

She also took her message to community organizations. The Berwyn Chamber of Commerce videotaped Pimm and Heinonen's joint presentation. The Berywn Womens' Institute hosted Pimm as a speaker.

Of her speaking experiences she says, "I feel that speaking to people at such events helps in conservation awareness, no matter how many people attend. If only one of them catches the conservation bug and starts to spread the message too, then you've been successful."

(Cont'd)

Conservation camper takes on challenge (cont'd)

Pimm is a six-year member of the Berwyn Multi-Club 4-H club. She put the organization's motto of "learn to do by doing" into action and enlisted fellow club members to assist in her awareness campaign. The club has traditionally taken part in a local trade fair parade so used the conservation theme for its float. Club members also made a conservation poster and a display on soil conservation for its achievement day.

In the spring of 1988, Pimm surveyed farmers around the Berwyn, Brownvale and Grimshaw areas with a questionnaire about conservation. She says she got a good response indicating a need to preserve the land for future generations, an interest in conservation methods and even conservation methods that were already being used.

Pimm also started a collection of articles on developing water resources in and around her community.

"I know that not everyone will be a conservationist," says the grade 11 Grimshaw High School student, "But if we can convince a few people to conserve, then they will gradually talk to other people and spread their knowledge. Conservation is easy to catch. It's like if someone starts to giggle and before you know it everyone around is giggling."

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# Agri-News Briefs

## MODERN DUST BOWL PLAY

Soil blowing in the wind raises an ethical dilemma for a young farm woman in "Planting in the Dust". The one-act monologue play will be performed in Foremost on April 11 at the Community Hall. The critically heralded play is sponsored by the County of Forty Mile Agricultural Committee and the Canada-Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT). In the play the problems of stewardship are approached through the eyes of Annie who has returned to the land homesteaded by her great grandparents. Her grandparents protected the land after the 30's Dust Bowl and her parents farmed fencerow to fencerow. The struggle to restore her farm has brought her in close communion with the land. The performance will be followed by a short discussion led by a local conservationist Annalee Hearn. The play is produced by the Alternative Energy Resources Organization, a non-profit group promoting sustainable agriculture based in Helena, Montana. For more information about the free performance contact Vern Arnold at 867-3530 or 867-3804.

## COMMERCIAL COLE CROP PRODUCTION

Production of fresh vegetables has boomed in the last decade in Alberta and Alberta Agriculture has a new publication available about producing cole crops. Specifically, the fact sheet looks at four common cole crops of cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts. Varieties, soil requirements, fertilizers, direct seeding, transplanting, weed and insect control, irrigation and special problems are discussed in the seven page fact sheet. For copies of the fact sheet contact Alberta Agriculture's Publications Office, Information Services, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 and quote Agdex 252/20-1.

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# Fresh vegetable industry growing

Golden wheat swaying in an early autumn breeze is more likely to be described as an Alberta scene than acres of broccoli, but broccoli crops along with many other vegetable crops are becoming more common in the province.

Fresh vegetable production has surged in the last decade across the province. About 2300 acres of commercial fresh vegetables were grown here in 1980. In 1988 that total was over 3200. While the difference doesn't seem large, it is when the average size of vegetable fields and the potential gross returns to farmers are considered.

The average grower's field is 25 to 30 acres while large operators have anywhere between 100 and 550 acres. Growers also can expect significant gross returns from every acre of vegetables, says Belinda Choban, one of Alberta Agriculture's vegetable crop extension specialists.

"Growers can expect a minimum gross return of $2,000 per acre and up to $15,000 or more for speciality vegetables," says Choban who works at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre. Choban adds that production costs limit the eventual net return. "Average production costs are 30 to 60 per cent of gross returns. Two of the limiting factors are labour and post-harvest handling including washing, cooling, trimming, grading and packaging. Marketing is another cost, as the producer is responsible for marketing his own crop."

Fresh vegetable sales figures have almost doubled from 1980's $3.8 million to $7.5 million for 1988. Some provincially grown vegetables hold a considerable share of the Alberta market. Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch reports around 40 per cent of beets, pumpkins, carrots and parsnips delivered to Edmonton and Calgary are Alberta grown. Green cabbage totals in at 56 per cent and rutabagas at 70 per cent.

Producers and the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board both share in the growth and success of their industry says Choban.

(Cont'd)

Fresh vegetable industry growing (cont'd)

"Expanded storage facilities have made it easier for producers to market their produce longer into the winter period. That time period is traditionally supplied by import markets," she says.

Diversification into non-traditional crops has also contributed to both increased acreage and sales. "People think you can't grow celery in Alberta, but you can," says Sharon Chmielewski of the board. Celery, along with green onions, cauliflower, slicing cucumbers, radishes and broccoli have been added to the list of Alberta grown produce that includes more traditional crops of corn, carrots, cabbages and rutabagas.

Vegetable crops differ from north to south says Choban. In the northern part of the province root--carrots and rutabagas--crops and cole--broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage and Brussel sprouts--crops have flourished. Corn, cooking onions and vine crops such as pumpkins, cucumbers and squash have thrived in the south.

Quality of Alberta produce has also improved says Choban. "Cooling facilities and equipment that remove field heat and innovative packaging and handling systems have greatly increased the quality of the vegetables commercial growers can offer to the marketplace."

Promotions by the marketing board have also increased the awareness of the Alberta industry with both the wholesale buyer and the consumer. The board has put the spotlight on Alberta produce through Fall Harvest Festivals during September and October in co-operation with wholesalers and retailers.

The board's organizational strength and ability has grown since its inception in 1975 making it easier for it to put together education and awareness campaigns says Chmielewski.

"Wholesale and food service industries have supported growers, and that's also been a key factor in the industry's growth," says Choban.

Albertan's appetite for fresh vegetables is also a factor. Canadian consumption has been growing steadily over the last 15 years. The Fresh For Flavor Foundation estimates the average Canadian eats about 504 pounds of fresh fruit and vegetables annually. That's more than twice as much as the average American.

(Cont'd)

Fresh vegetable industry growing (cont'd)

"Our large appetites for fresh produce makes the opportunity for growth and expansion very good. It also means with our short growing season our producers could be very busy," says Choban.

Commercial vegetables aren't the only ones grown in the province, but are the easiest to account for as their sales are regulated. If the acres of market garden vegetables, usually sold through farmer's markets, and vegetables sold to processors are added together, the total swells to just over 9,000 acres. Alberta farm cash receipts for field and greenhouse vegetables in 1987 were $32 million.

These figures don't include potatoes, which are treated separately as a speciality crop. About 23,800 acres of potatoes were seeded in Alberta in 1988.

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Sharon Chmielewski
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Unique employee exchange benefits Alberta and Japan

Waving Canadian flags greeted Jeff Kucharski and the beverage buyer for The Seiyu Ltd, one of Japanese largest retail companies, as they pulled into a green tea factory in central Japan.

Kucharski says the welcome he received from 150 bowing office and factory workers is one his memories of the exceptional treatment he received while working in Japan as a part of an employee exchange between Alberta Agriculture and the Japanese company.

The exchange also put Kucharski in unique situations, like being the first foreigner to do a taste test at the green tea factory he visited or being a member of the Japanese delegation at a Canada-Japan businessmens' conference.

The unique employee exchange program between Alberta Agriculture and one of the major Japanese retail companies started four years ago. Kucharski, now trade director for Japan in the market development division, was the first Alberta Agriculture staff member to participate in the exchange. Mike Leslie is in his last weeks with Seiyu and Brenda Lennox left in mid-March to start her two-year exchange.

"The department is proud of establishing such a unique relationship. It's the only one of its kind in Canada and we hope the benefits will continue," says David Wong senior trade director for Asia Pacific.

The most valuable aspect of the exchange is the first hand experience both sides get from working in each other's market place. "For us the knowledge we gain about the marketplace from trade missions, is put into sharper focus by the exchangee's long term familiarity with the marketplace," he says.

"Japan is a very complicated and competitive marketplace. Tastes and packaging are very different. The hands on experience of our exchange people gives us better insight in adapting existing or developing new products," Kucharski says.

(Cont'd)

Unique employee exchange benefits Alberta and Japan (cont'd)

The knowledge gained from the exchange ripples through all of Alberta Agriculture's marketing sector, Kucharski says, from market development to marketing services and the Food Processing Development Centre in Leduc. "Because Japan is one of the toughest markets to break into, what we learn from the exchange about the Japanese market and marketing in general is relevant to international marketing."

"For Seiyu, the exchange gives the company a better idea of what products Alberta has to offer and the capabilities of our growing food processing industry," Kucharski says. The end result, he says, is that Alberta's food processing industry has a better chance to react to marketing opportunities.

While in Alberta, the Seiyu exchangee is doing business for his company. In 1986 direct sales to Seiyu were less than $500,000, by 1988 that total had swelled to almost $4 million. Wong says the sales growth is forecast to continue. Sales this year are estimated to top $6 million with a target of $10 million in 1990.

Satoshi Mine is currently representing Seiyu in Alberta. His predecessors were Kenji Makise and Hiro Shiragami. Mine will be visiting processing plants and talking to companies about their products. The major interests to date have been for french fries, beef and beef products and honey.

Seiyu's 1988 sales were close to $8 billion U.S. The chain has nine department stores, its centerpiece of 223 superstores and supermarkets, 12 speciality stores, 1229 convenience stores and a direct marketing organization. Alberta exchangees work throughout the organization from inventory and personnel to buying and sales during their two year exchange.

Canada Fair is an annual event Seiyu uses to showcase Canadian products. During the 12th annual fair last November, Alberta food products were featured along with other Canadian foods, clothing and housewares.

(Cont'd)

Unique employee exchange benefits Alberta and Japan (cont'd)

Japan has consistently been one of Alberta's top three trading partners. The United States is the largest, followed by Japan and China.

Wong says Alberta now sells more value-added food products to Japan. Through the exchange, and other marketing efforts, Alberta's food processing industry is not only selling more products but also more diversified products. "We're diversifying what we sell and adding export value by selling value added products," he says.

In 1987 Alberta's processing cash receipts were $4.7 billion and $3.9 billion for primary products.

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Contact: Jeff Kucharski
427-4241

David Wong
427-4241

April 10, 1989
For immediate release

# Improving goat meat production

Speciality crops and livestock have made a difference to Alberta farmers looking for ways to maintain a positive cash flow when traditional commodity prices tumble.

One area of diversification has been goats. Demand and return for goat meat has been strong, but Alberta breeders are looking at improving production and a more formal marketing system for their product.

Those topics will be discussed at a symposium and general meeting of the Alberta Goat Breeders Association (Meat Goat Division) at the Leduc Elks Hall on April 22. Keynote speakers, Roy Berg and Dorien Brosnihen, will focus on production. Berg, of the University of Alberta, will talk about goat genetics and Brosnihen, of Western Breeders, will highlight exotic goat semen. Management and marketing are other agenda items says Ken Smith, one of the association's directors.

Anyone interested in goats is encouraged to attend says Smith. One of the objectives of the symposium is to make farmers more aware of the potential of goats, he says. "Northern Alberta farmers, in particular, have a strong comparative advantage in production. Goats don't compete for pasture grass with cattle and sheep, but can actually enhance the pasture by eating weeds and brush." He uses his goat herd for brush control during the summer. The goats prefer aspen, rose bushes and willows to grass, he says.

The association is also looking at organizing the supply side of its industry. "This will enable producers to market through a producer owned agency to large order buyers both domestic and foreign," says Smith. There is strong demand for goat meat (Chevon) from Canada's diverse ethnic community, especially around Christmas and Easter.

Meat goats are one of three types found in Alberta. Producers have also had success with dairy and angora goats. For more information about the symposium contact Smith in Smoky Lake at 365-2080.

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Contact: Ken Smith
365-2080

April 10, 1989
For immediate release

# High tech display at Pork Congress

High tech will add an extra feature to the show and sale ring during the annual Alberta Pork Congress.

A microchip implant and computer identification system will be used to display information on each animal as it enters the show and sale ring says Art Lange of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch.

On the day prior to show day all swine will be implanted with a small electronic transponder. Smaller than a grain of rice and sealed in surgical glass, the transponder is implanted in the ear or tailhead using a 12 gauge syringe. The implant contains an antenna and a coded microchip. One of thirty-four billion unique numbers is assigned to each chip.

A "reader" held close to the animal excites the antenna and causes it to transmit the unique identification code back to where it can be shown on a display, says Lange.

"Company representatives will match the unique identification number with ownership and performance data recorded in a computer. As the animals are introduced into the ring, each animal will be "wanded". The reader will identify each animal electronically and trigger the computer to recall the data. This descriptive information will be displayed in lights on a five by eight foot electronic sign above the judging stand," says Lange. The technology is from Anitech Identification Systems, an Ontario company.

The new high technology identification system is one of many technologies and products that will be on display during the annual Alberta Pork Congress in Red Deer June 13 through 15. For more information on congress activities contact Lange at 427-5319.

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Contact: Art Lange
427-5319

April 10, 1989
For immediate release

## Chinook research group receives CARTT project funding

Four soil conservation projects in southeast central Alberta have been given funding approval by the Canada/Alberta Agreements on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT).

The Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) will carry out the projects in the Municipal District of Acadia and in Special Areas 2, 3 and 4. All four of the projects will look at reduced tillage alternatives to conventional fallow.

"I'm pleased to see CARA demonstrating alternatives to conventional summerfallow," says Les Wetter, CARTT area A co-ordinator. "We will see a lot of potentially erodible land in summerfallow in 1989 due to low moisture reserves. How we manage the land in a fallow year is always critical, but especially in a year following poor crops when residue levels are low, as could be the case in 1989."

One project will use legumes as an alternative to fallow. The demonstration project's objective is to provide an option to conventional summerfallow. Legumes have two advantages. They can biologically fix atmospheric nitrogen and also provide soil cover during a portion of the summerfallow year.

Four legume crops--Indianhead black lentil, sweet clover, Alaska 81 pea and Maple pea--will be seeded into a field of wheat stubble at two different times in the spring of 1989. These crops will be worked into the soil at full bloom using various tillage implements. Wheat yields and soil fertility will be monitored in 1989 and compared to a field which has been conventionally summerfallowed.

All three of the remaining projects involve the use of herbicides to reduce tillage. One of those projects, fall and spring applied 2,4-D to reduce tillage, will be carried out at three sites slated for summerfallow in 1989. The demonstration will compare fall and spring applied 2,4-D alone, in combination with Banvel and with a strip receiving no chemical application. An assessment of weeds, crop residues and timing of first tillage operations will be undertaken in the project.

(Cont'd)

Chinook research group receives CARTT project funding (cont'd)

Another project, reduced tillage systems for fallow, involves reduced tillage with 18 herbicides and herbicide combinations in comparison to conventional tillage fallow. Data gathered will enable CARA to do an economic evaluation of alternate fallow techniques as well as monitoring weed and crop residues.

The remaining projects will compare a conventional tillage, conservation tillage (blade and herbicide) and chemical treatment in a fallow year. Crop residues remaining on the surface, soil moisture and crop yields in the following years will be monitored.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

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Contact: Leslie Wetter
948-8511

April 10, 1989
For Immediate Release

# Provincial 4-H speak-off April 22

The public is invited to come and listen to some of the best young public speakers in the province at the annual Provincial 4-H Public Speaking Finals in Edmonton on April 22.

Fourteen 4-H members from across Alberta will present their speeches to their audience and six judges. Each participant will give a prepared speech and an impromptu speech. Topics for the prepared speeches are given one week prior to the competition.

Participants in this event advance to provincial competition through club, district and regional speaking competitions.

The speaking finals will be held in Salons 1 and 2 at the Edmonton Northlands Agricom, starting at 2:30 p.m. Colleen Pentelchuck, the 1987 provincial 4-H public speaking champion will be the Mistress of Ceremonies.

Alberta Agriculture and Edmonton Northlands are the joint sponsors of the event. For more information contact the Alberta Agriculture 4-H branch at 427-2541.

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Contact: Anita Styba
Phone: 427-2541

April 10, 1989
For immediate release

Conference discusses direction of agricultural computing

Directions and opportunities of computer use in agriculture will be in the spotlight at a national conference in Calgary next month.

The third national Agricultural Management Systems--Directions and Visions conference will bring together industry leaders, education and extension professionals and members of the academic community to discuss computer technology and agricultural management.

The conference is organized by Alberta Agriculture and Olds College and sponsored by the Alberta Wheat Pool, the Alberta Agricultural Development Corporation, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, IBM Canada Ltd., Agri-Trends Research and members of the Canadian Association of Agricultural Computing. The three-day conference is May 1 through 3.

Speakers from across Canada and the United States will present their views on subjects ranging from the impact of computers in farm management to computer assisted learning in agricultural education. Keynote speakers Michael Boehlje, of the University of Minnesota, and Daryl Kraft, of the University of Manitoba, will discuss megatrends in North American agriculture and an outlook for Canadian agriculture.

"Intensive business management and marketing workshops and seminars are also part of the conference. They are designed to help high technology companies and individuals refine their business management and marketing skills to compete in the North American agricultural computer products marketplace," says Paul Gervais of Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch.

There will also be pre-conference activities, says Gervais. "Private and public organizations will have an opportunity to discuss current agricultural computing projects. Representatives of chartered banks, federal and provincial lending institutions and provincial governments will provide a national perspective on on-going developments in their organizations".

(Con't)

Conferences discusses direction of agricultural computing (cont'd)

Registration fees received before April 21 are $150. This fee includes conference proceedings, two luncheons and a banquet. For further information contact Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds by calling 556-4240, by writing Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or by FAX (403)556-7545.

Contact: Paul Gervais
556-4240

# AGRI-NEWS

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April 17, 1989

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Information Services Division

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Farm weather forecast as close as the telephone

Alberta's Farm Weather Line has begun its fifth season of bringing farmers across the province up-to-date agricultural weather forecasts.

"Starting this month producers will be able to telephone one of four regional weather centres for the most current farm weather information available," says Peter Dzikowski, Alberta Agriculture's weather resource specialist.

The Lethbridge weather line started early this month while the Calgary, Edmonton and Grand Prairie lines began service in mid-April. The weather lines operate until the completion of harvest usually sometime in late October. Alberta Agriculture and Environment Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service co-operate in providing the easy access and up-to-date weather forecasts.

"It's clear the service is useful and popular with producers. The lines received more than 102,000 calls in 1988, an average of about 128 calls per day. Farmers say they use it planning their work whether they're spraying, haying or combining," he says.

The recorded forecasts farmers hear include the same information the public hears such as expected highs and lows and possibility of precipitation, but also more specific information such as relative humidity, wind speed and direction and the drying index.

Forecasts specific to each region are updated four times daily at 5:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. The lines aren't toll-free and the caller will be billed normal long distance charges if calling from outside the local area.

The telephone numbers for the four weather lines are 539-7654 in Grand Prairie, 468-9196 in Edmonton, 295-1003 in Calgary and 328-RAIN (7246) in Lethbridge. (A map is attached outlining the area each regional number covers.)

(Cont'd)

Farm weather forecast as close as the telephone (cont'd)

Alberta Agriculture's conservation and development branch also prepares a weather summary. "The summary is an aid in evaluating what has happened. Through the growing season, the summary includes weekly daily and average temperatures and precipitation from 41 locations around the province. A comparison to year-ago figures each week and month are also included," says Dzikowski.

For more information about the Farm Weather Line or to receive the Alberta Agriculture Weather Summary contact Dzikowski in Edmonton at 422-4385.

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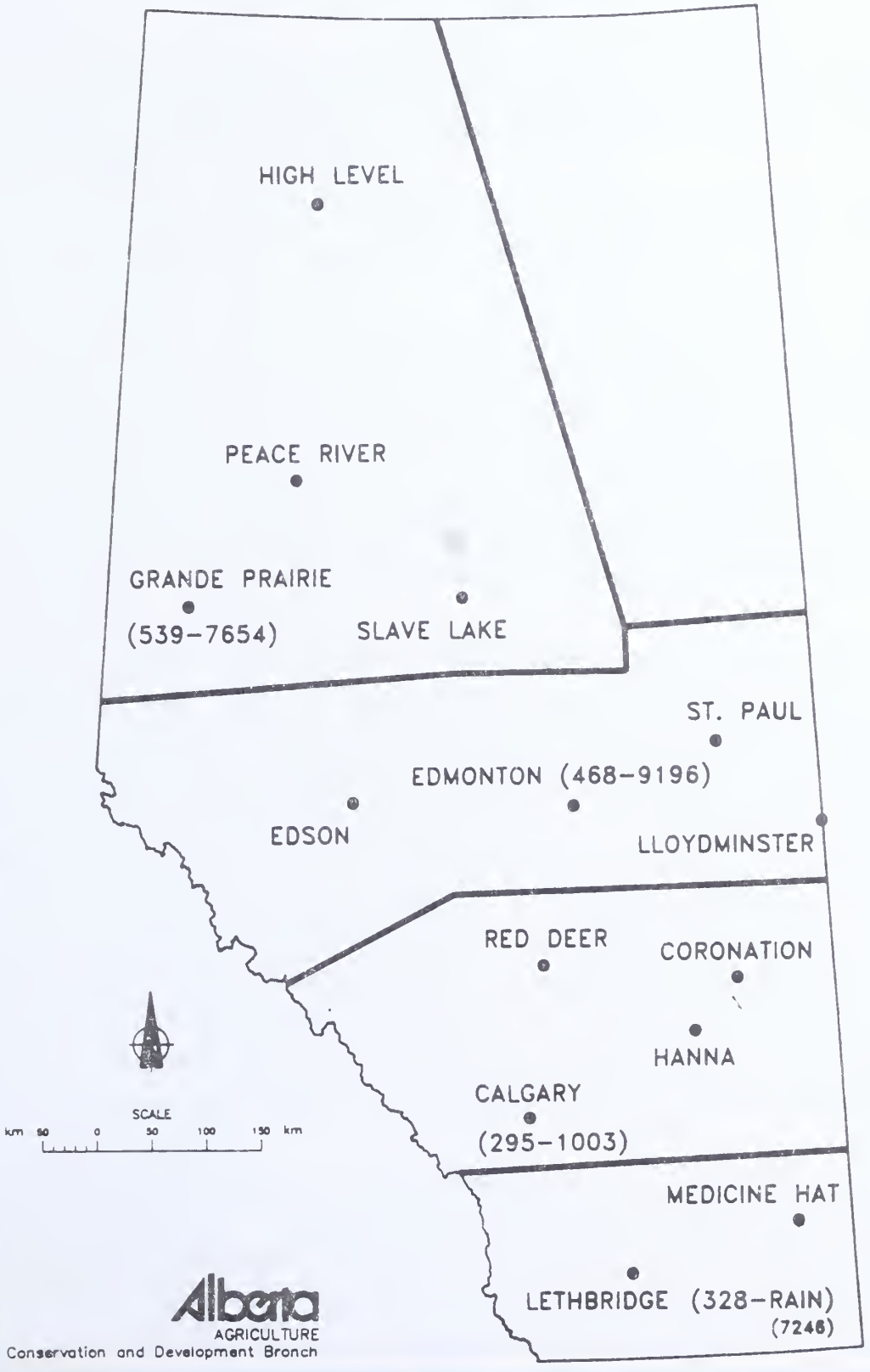
Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

# FARM WEATHER LINE OPERATIONAL AREAS



April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Russian wheat aphid numbers falling

The number of Russian wheat aphids found in monitored fields has been dropping steadily since the first cold weather in January says an Alberta Agriculture entomologist.

"In the fields monitored by Agriculture Canada's Lethbridge Research Station the numbers have fallen to the point where they can't find the insects," says Jim Jones.

Jones cautions that the lack of insects in those fields doesn't mean there aren't Russian wheat aphids somewhere. "Roadsides and other fields haven't been monitored, so farmers should be on the lookout for Russian wheat aphids this spring."

The insect is indigenous to the Mediterranean and the southern U.S.S.R and was accidentally introduced to North American in central Mexico in 1980. The pest was first found in Alberta in the Milk River area last July.

By fall, infestations of Russian wheat aphids were widespread south of Highway 3, says Jones. "I don't know of any infestations north of Highway 3, although it's quite possible the insects are there. Winter cereal growers south of Highway 1 and up into the Acadia Valley area should be aware of the possibility of infestations developing this spring."

Jones says not a lot is known about the insect that damages its wheat, barley and triticale host plants. It will also infest rye and oats but doesn't cause as much damage. Some grasses can also be a host to the insects. "The aphids have shown some very unusual cold hardiness. We hadn't expected that kind of response from this insect. In a milder winter, it's sure to do better so, we're looking at long term management of this bug," he says.

Winter wheat and fall rye crops infested last fall may still be infested, says Jones. He says farmers should go out and look at their crops as soon as possible for damage and signs the insects are still around.

(Cont'd)

Russian wheat aphid numbers falling (cont'd)

Two types of damage may be visible. Streaking is one symptom. Pale yellow or reddish purple streaks may be visible in the plant leaves. Patches of dead plants in the field are an indication of Russian wheat aphid infestation or winter kill. Infested winter wheat is more susceptible to winter kill, says Jones.

"Economic thresholds for Russian wheat aphids are lower than for other cereal aphids. When ten per cent of winter cereal plants show symptoms of Russian wheat aphids infestation and have the insects on the plants, then farmers should spray," he says. Currently there are two registered products for aphid control on cereals. They are Malathion and Dimethoate.

Farmers can contact their district agriculturist or Jones at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center in Brooks (362-3391) for help in diagnosing Russian wheat aphids.

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Contact: Jim Jones
362-3391

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

## Spring soil sampling recommended

Soil testing is a good idea this spring says an Alberta Agriculture soils specialist, especially given the results of last fall's tests.

"A summary of 1988 fall soil samples indicates a lack of consistent trends for available soil nitrogen levels across Alberta when we compared it to the previous year. Even drought areas displayed inconsistencies," says Len Kryzanowski, of the Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory.

"The only consistent trend of note is that fallow soils have higher available nitrogen levels than grain stubble soils in non-irrigated fields. However, the magnitude of this difference varies a great deal among the soil zones.

"We recommend, because of the inconsistencies, farmers should consider spring soil sampling if they haven't already fall soil tested," he says.

Soil testing is an effective tool for measuring available soil nutrients to determine fertilizer requirements, especially if a farmer is unsure of soil nutrient levels. A soil test report usually provides information on available nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur levels, pH, salinity, free lime level and texture.

Kryzanowski says the concerns farmers have about spring soil testing is the time needed for proper soil sampling and to get back laboratory analyses and recommendations.

"Farmers maybe can't afford the time to sample all their fields, but should consider sampling one or two fields if they are unsure of their fertilizer plans," he says.

Proper soil sampling is essential for accurate test results and reliable fertilizer recommendations. "The soil test results and recommendations are only as good the soil samples collected. Poor soil sampling will only result in unreliable results and recommendations," reminds Kryzanowski. For the best testing results, Kryzanowski has five points to remember. First is not to sample a frozen or water logged field.

(Cont'd)

Spring soil testing recommended (cont'd)

Second, the farmer should size up each field he is sampling based on past observations of variations in crop growth or yield, soil texture, color, slope, degree of erosion, drainage and past management of the field. "Avoid unusual areas such as dead or back furrows, old straw, hay or manure piles, water ways, saline spots, eroded knolls and old fence rows. Separate samples should be taken from sizable areas where growth is significantly different from the rest of the field," he says.

Areas larger than 60 acres tend to have considerable soil variation, so between 15 and 20 places in the field should be sampled at random to get a composite soil sample representative of the area.

"Depth of soil sampling is also important, because crops can utilize nitrogen to a depth of two feet (60 cm) or more," notes Kryzanowski. Using a proper soil sampling tool, the sample should be taken at intervals of 0 to six inches (0-15 cm), six to 12 inches (15-30 cm) and 12 to 24 inches (30-60 cm). Approximately 18 ounces (500 g) of soil is needed from each depth for analysis. The different depths must be kept separate and be properly dried. Each depth's samples should be mixed together to form a representative sample. Sampling tools are available from any Alberta Agriculture district office or a fertilizer supply company.

Finally, Kryzanowski says an information sheet needs to be fully completed noting any usual problems. A duplicate copy should be kept by the farmer.

Soil samples should be sent to a reputable soil testing laboratory. There are a number of private laboratories in the province that can provide fairly rapid analyses and return of results, he says. Samples can also be sent to the Alberta Agriculture Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory.

For further information on soil sampling, contact an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist, regional crop production or soils specialist or Kryzanowski at the Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory, 9th floor, O.S. Longman Building, 6909-116 Street, Edmonton, T6H 4P2 or call 436-9150 or 427-6362 (through the RITE system).

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Contact: Len Kryzanowski
436-9150

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Farm fatalities decrease in 1988

Farm fatalities in Alberta decreased by one-third in 1988, the second year in the last three to record a major annual decrease.

There were 12 farm fatalities last year and 18 in 1987. Last year's total is also significantly below the four year--1984 to 1988--average of 19.

Last year was the second consecutive year there were no deaths recorded in the six to ten years age group. Only one person under the age of 18 years, a one-year old infant, died in a farm accident in 1988.

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga says, "The six to ten year-old age group is the one we target in the Farm Safety Rural School program. The tremendous support and acceptance the program has received from farmers and rural schools has definitely been a factor in the decline of farm fatalities."

The Minister adds, "We hope that the emphasis given to farm safety in the classroom will continue to have this very positive effect. If farm safety is learned as a youngster, then those principles can be applied for a lifetime."

Farm machinery claimed seven lives of the 12 lost in farm accidents. Some of the contributing factors in the deaths were extra riders, a step a victim was standing on breaking, attempting to dig out a tractor that was still in gear and a bale falling off the prong causing a tractor to flip over. (See attached statistical tables)

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Contact: Solomon Kyeremanteng
Farm Safety program manager
427-2186

TABLE 1--FARM FATALITIES 1984-1988

| Year | Number | % Change from previous year |
|---|---|---|
| 1984 | 25 | -7 |
| 1985 | 29 | +16 |
| 1986 | 13 | -55 |
| 1987 | 18 | +38 |
| 1988 | 12 | -33 |

TABLE 2--AGE GROUP OF VICTIMS

| Age Group | Number | % Change from 1987 |
|---|---|---|
| Below 6 | 1 | -75 |
| 6 to 10 | 0 | 0 |
| 11 to 17 | 0 | -200 |
| 18 to 34 | 2 | 0 |
| 35 to 44 | 2 | 0 |
| 45 to 60 | 3 | -57 |
| Above 60 | 4 | +300 |

TABLE 3--1988 FATALITIES

| Date | Age | Accident |
|---|---|---|
| Jan. 6 | 68 | caught in PTO while grinding grain |
| Jan. 21 | 46 | struck by bale while loading |
| March 25 | 80 | tractor rollover |
| April 15 | 74 | tractor rollover while unloading bales |
| April 25 | 33 | caught between disc and catwalk on seed drill |
| June 7 | 18 | suffocation in a grain bin |
| July 18 | 42 | extra rider runover by tractor |
| Aug. 18 | 61 | runover by tractor while digging tractor out |
| Sept. 10 | 60 | kicked by cow while milking |
| Oct. 13 | 37 | explosion while refueling |
| Oct. 19 | 1 | extra ride runover by tractor |
| Nov. 2 | 52 | trench cave-in while laying water line |

SOURCE: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

Two counties address conservation issues with CARTT funding

Two east central Alberta county Agricultural Service Boards have received project funding from the Canada/Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT) to promote soil and water conservation.

Funding approval has been given to Agricultural Service Boards in the counties of Stettler and Beaver, says Carol Bettac, CARTT area B co-ordinator. The CARRT program's area B includes the north central, north east and north west agriculture regions running from Red Deer north to the Barrhead/Athabasca/Lac La Biche districts and from the Saskatchewan border west to the foothills.

The project in the County of Beaver will tackle the problem of soil organic matter decline and erosion by demonstrating the use of legume "plowdowns" instead of traditional summerfallow. Indianhead lentils will be grown on sites in the Tofield, Ryley-Holden and Viking areas.

Bettac says sites will have three plots each three acres in size. Two plots will be sown to lentils and one will be fallow. One plot will be seeded the first week of May. If weeds become a problem after 60 days, then the lentils will be worked into the soil. The second plot will be seeded in late June or early July and left standing until the following spring. The third plot will be fallow. All of the plots will be cropped in 1990 and their yields will be measured.

"Monitoring soil moisture, soil nutrient levels and precipitation prior to this spring's seeding, in the fall after 'plowdown', before spring 1990 cereal crop seeding and after harvesting the crop in the fall of 1990 are keys to determining the benefits of each alternative," says Bettac.

In February, the County of Stettler hosted a soil conservation awareness conference with funding assistance from CARTT. Featured speaker at the conference was Senator Herb Sparrow.

(Cont'd)

Two counties address conservation issues with CARTT funding (cont'd)

Senator Sparrow chaired a Senate committee that examined soil and water conservation in Canada. The committee's report "Soil at Risk" was published in 1984.

Conference speakers and participants also discussed practical soil management, shelterbelts, the Soil Conservation Act, and the county's soil conservation policy.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

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Contact: Carol Bettac
679-1210

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Balzac 4-Her visits Washington

Kari Griffith of Balzac spent the last week in Washington, D.C. as one of ten Canadian delegates at a national American 4-H conference.

Griffith was selected to represent Alberta at the conference during 1988 4-H selections. The Washington trip is one of the most prestigious 4-H award trips given in the province, says Marguerite Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist.

The 1989 theme at the National 4-H Conference was "4-H for Youth for America". Delegates enhanced their leadership skills through conference assignments and also had to chance to get familiar with Washington. Capitol Hill, the White House, the Lincoln Memorial, the Smithsonian Institute and the Arlington Cemetery were stops on a tour of the U.S. capital.

Before leaving for the conference, the Canadian delegates met in Ottawa for an orientation program. They also toured Parliament Hill and Rideau Hall.

The trip was sponsored by Semex Canada.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8509

Kari Griffith
226-0555

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Alberta 4-Hers go to Ottawa

Six Albertans were among 60 4-H members who met in Ottawa recently to increase their awareness and understanding of the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship.

Attending the National 4-H Citizenship Seminar were: David Morey, of Mayerthorpe; Cody Church, of Calgary; Teresa Eleniak, of Tofield; Laura-Jeanne Lehr, of Medicine Hat; Janice M. Hanson, of Airdrie; and, Rene Cloutier, of Morinville.

Delegates spent a busy week at workshops, on tours and with social activities. They toured Parliament Hill gaining an understanding of the structure and function of Canadian government and received citizenship certificates at a Citizenship Court.

"The National 4-H Citizenship Seminar is a great opportunity for 4-H members to become more familiar with another part of the Canada while at the same time enhancing public awareness of 4-H," says Stark.

Alberta delegates were sponsored by the Canadian 4-H Council and the Alberta Wheat Pool.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8509

David Morey
786-4608

Cody Church
239-0469

Teresa Eleniak
662-2296

Laura-Jeanne Lehr
527-4311

Janice M. Hanson
948-5236

Rene Cloutier
939-6875

AGRI-NEWS Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch Phone: (403) 427-2121

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# 4-H and Girl Guides join forces

Three Alberta 4-H members joined 34 Girl Guides for the recent Alberta Girls Parliament in Edmonton.

Loretta Knowles, of Byemoor, Claudelle Seguin, of Westlock, and Cynthia Bevans, of Cardston, spent four days at the Grey Nuns Centre where they learned how the parliamentary system evolved and how it works in Canada.

The 4-H members put the organization's motto "learn to do by doing" into action in a mock government debate. Government and opposition sides debated building an international airport in Red Deer.

"The Alberta Girls Parliament staff was very impressed with the speaking skills of the 4-H representatives," says Marguertie Stark, Alberta Agriculture's provincial 4-H camping and exchange specialist.

As well as gaining insight into the workings of government, delegates also had the opportunity to tour the Alberta Legislature.

Alberta Agriculture sponsored 4-H delegate participation in the program.

30

Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8509

Loretta Knowles
579-2368

Claudelle Seguin
349-5398

Cynthia Bevans
653-3866

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

North west regional home economist appointed

Randi Sandbu will be renewing her acquaintance with north west Alberta as Alberta Agriculture's newest regional home economist.

"I'm looking forward to meeting and working with the people in the Barrhead region again," she says. Sandbu acted as the regional home economist for eight months between October, 1986 and June, 1987.

As regional home economist Sandbu will be responsible for co-ordinating home economics activities and programs in the north west region.

She started her career with Alberta Agriculture in 1974 training in Wetaskiwin. She was district home economist in Rimbey, Lacombe and Ponoka before returning to Wetaskiwin in 1984. She also has experience in the retail clothing trade.

Sandbu received her BSc in home economics from the University of Alberta in 1974. She was raised on a mixed farming operation in the New Sarepta area.

Faye Douglas Phillips, Sandbu's predecessor, is now Alberta Agriculture's home study program co-ordinator.

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Contact: Randi Sandbu
674-8264

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

# Laboratory agronomist appointed

Developing new methods for routine and research analyses of soils, plants and animal feeds is the focus of a new laboratory agronomist position in Alberta Agriculture's Soil and Animal Nutrition Laboratory.

Dan Heaney brings a wealth of laboratory experience to his new job. Heaney was laboratory co-ordinator and instructor in the department of soil science at the University of Alberta. He is familiar with most private sector laboratories conducting soils, plant and feed analyses. Recently, he managed a sample exchange project involving public and private labs in Western Canada.

Working with private laboratories to develop new methods and technology will be part of the newly created position. "This will assure lab clients of the latest and best services applicable to Alberta conditions," says Adolph Goettel, head of the soils branch.

Along with other staff, Heaney will transfer the latest recommendations for fertilizer use and amendments such as lime based on research in Alberta. As well, he will develop training programs for laboratories, fertilizer dealers and department staff.

Heaney has a MSc degree in soil science from the University of Alberta.

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Contact: Dan Heaney
436-9150

April 17, 1989
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

FEDERATION PROMOTES BEEF IN JAPAN

A group representing Alberta beef producers, packers, processors and exporters have banded together with Alberta Agriculture to promote Canadian meat in the international marketplace. The Canadian Meat Export Federation will start by targeting beef sales to Japan. Among the mandate objectives are promotion of Canadian meat products to export market consumers, retailers, wholesalers and food service outlets, assisting federation members to better understand market dynamics, providing support materials and co-ordinating general marketing efforts such as seminars, missions, market studies, product demonstrations and trade show participation. Currently, the federation is developing promotion strategy and expanding membership. It hopes other provinces and meat industry representatives will get involved. For more information contact federation president Len Vogelaar in Pincher Creek at 627-2078 or vice-president Bob Kalef, of Centennial Packers in Calgary at 259-4242.

AGGIE DAYS

Most young urban students don't really know the role agriculture plays in their life. Local Calgary and rural school students will get some practical lessons at the fourth annual Aggie Days at Stampede Park. The general public is also invited to attend two days of activities April 20 and 21. The "hands on" and "all senses" displays will show how agriculture affects our daily lives. Aggie Days is held in conjunction with the annual Dairy Classic. For more information contact Don Stewart, Calgary Exhibition and Stampede at 261-0121 or Lorraine Rowan, Aggie Days chairman at 938-7298.

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AGRICULTURE
Information Services Division

April 24, 1989
For immediate release

# New agriculture ministers appointed

A new team of Minister and Associate Minister has taken over the helm of Alberta Agriculture.

Ernie Isley, the new Minister of Agriculture, and Shirley McClellan, the new Associate Minister, were sworn in along with their 25 cabinet colleagues on April 14. They take over from Peter Elzinga, now Minister of Economic Development and Trade, and Shirley Cripps, who retired.

ERNIE ISLEY

Agriculture is Mr. Isley's third cabinet portfolio. The Bonnyville MLA was first elected in 1979 and took the reins of the Manpower ministry in 1982. His most recent cabinet post was Public Works Supply and Services from May, 1986.

"This is a very exciting time to be involved in agriculture in Alberta. We've weathered some tough times and along the way have shown the strength of this industry and the opportunities we have to grow in products and trade," says Mr. Isley.

SHIRLEY MCLELLAN

Mrs. McClellan is a relative rookie on the political scene but not to agriculture. She farms with her husband and son in the New Brigden area. She was elected in a November, 1987 by-election in the Chinook constituency.

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New ministers appointed (cont'd)

"I'm looking forward to the challenges and opportunities of agriculture today in Alberta. We have a place in the national and international scene and our producers and agri-businesses are second to none," she says.

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# Oats study to be released

A study commissioned by Alberta Agriculture to overview the oats industry will be released on May 4.

"Oat Marketing and Processing: A Western Canada and Alberta Perspective" looks at the challenges and opportunities in the industry and makes specific recommendations for producers, agri-business and government, says Garry Benoit, manager of the commodity development section of Alberta Agriculture's marketing services division.

Representatives of the industry have been invited to attend the official release of the study and participate in a morning long discussion, says Benoit.

Ian Gillies of the Peat Marwick Consulting Group will be on hand to outline the study and its recommendations. The consulting firm conducted and wrote the report commissioned last winter.

Producer marketing options will be presented by representatives of the Alberta Wheat Pool, United Grain Growers and Balfour Grain. Doug Bienert and Dianne Hayward from Alberta Agriculture's market development division will discuss export opportunities for both pony and processing oats.

Research developments will also be addressed. "Recognition of the human nutritional value of oats and improving quality for oats to remain competitive as a feed grain are important factors in continued research and development," says Benoit.

Preliminary discussion of an Alberta oat growers organization is also on the agenda.

Need for the study was identified by a department oats steering committee chaired by Stan Schellenberger, chairman of Alberta Agriculture's planning secretariat. Other committee members are Alberta Grain Commission chairman Ken Beswick, Benoit and three market development trade directors Doug Bienert, Dianne Hayward and Elton Dunk.

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Oats study to be released (cont'd)

The study release and seminar-styled discussion begins at 9 a.m. at the J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton. For registration and other information contact Emile deMilliano, commodity development section, at 427-7366.

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# Oats commanding producer attention

Farmers are paying more attention to the potential of oats as a money making cereal crop.

Currently, oats are a relative minor crop in Alberta totalling less than one per cent of all grain sales. But, premium prices for high quality feed oats for horses--pony oats--and processed oats for human consumption--milling oats--have made the crop more attractive.

Top prices also means buyers are looking for a top quality product says an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist. "Grain buyers purchasing oats as pony and milling oats are looking for bright clean oats free from mildew, smut and rust," says Harvey Yoder, Lac La Biche DA. "They prefer oats with less than one per cent wild oats, less than two per cent of other voluntary grains such as barley and a low percentage of green kernels.

"Buyers also want oats to have a good bushel weight, generally 40 pounds or more, and millers prefer an oat with a low hull content and uniform kernel size."

Producing good quality oats requires good management and also some assistance from the weather. Oats thrive with moisture, moderate temperatures and little wind.

Oats can be grown most successfully in the black and grey wooded soil zones of the province, says Murray McLelland, cereal crop specialist with the field crops branch in Lacombe. These areas--an arc through west central and north east central Alberta and the Peace Region--have fewer hot drying winds.

Field selection is a critical first step in oats production, says Yoder. "Flat topography, or a relatively uniform field is best. This will reduce the number of green kernels. For better production, the field shouldn't have a wild oat or volunteer barley problem or have been recently treated with soil incorporated herbicides for wild oat control."

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Oats commanding producer attention (cont'd)

Variety also plays a role in eventual quality. "Select the variety that you think will give you the best results on your farm. Jasper is the latest early maturity variety suitable for short season oat growing areas. It matures the same time as Athabasca and has a higher bushel weight than all other varieties except Calibre. It doesn't yield as well as the later maturing varieties such as Cascade, Grizzly and Calibre. Another disadvantage is variable kernel size," says Yoder.

Each variety has characteristics that make it better for a particular farmer, area or as a final product. Jasper's straw length is the same as Athabasca, but is more resistant to lodging than Athabasca or Grizzly. Calibre is a little later maturing than Grizzly. Its kernel size is more even than Jasper and it has a low hull content, Yoder notes.

Cascade has been doing very well in most areas, he says. Its straw is shorter and stiffer than Grizzly. It usually out yields Grizzly, Athabasca and Jasper, but has a lower bushel weight than Jasper and Calibre.

Derby, the latest variety development, isn't commercially available this year for seeding.

Yoder also has some sowing advice. "If possible, sow early after the soil temperature is 5°C or higher. Seed two to two and one-half inches deep, or to adequate moisture for uniform germination. Seeding rates of two and one-half to three bushels is recommended. Some farmers have increased the seeding rate to reduce second growth."

Oats respond to all fertilizer nutrients where the nutrients are limiting. "Oats show a great response to low levels of nitrogen application compared to barley, wheat and canola. High levels of nitrogen could increase the protein content, but since no premium is paid on protein, moderate levels of nitrogen are recommended. Moderate levels of nitrogen also help reduce second growth.

"High levels of nitrogen in relationship to other nutrients, could delay maturity, increase the chance of second growth and lodging problems. Apply phosphorus, potash and sulphur at recommended levels," he says.

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Oats commanding producer attention (cont'd)

In 1988 Alberta producers grew 55 per cent of the Canadian oats total.

More information about oats production and varieties is available from Alberta Agriculture district agriculture offices and regional crop production specialists.

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Murray McLelland
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Conservation activities in the Peace

Farm conservation groups in the Peace River region have begun to take advantage of the Canada Alberta Agreement on Soil, Water and Cropping Research and Technology Transfer (CARTT).

The CARTT program is providing two farm groups, one in Nampa and the other in Spirit River, with a conservation tillage seed drill. The groups will seed between ten and 14 forty acre plots and compare zero and minimum tillage with conventional tillage.

A technician will be hired to assist in calibrating the seeding rates, doing plant counts, taking soil samples and recording yield data. Soil moisture and temperature will also be monitored.

"These large scale farm plots will complement a more detailed small scale reduced tillage project in the Rycroft area that's also funded by the CARTT program," says John Zylstra, CARTT co-ordinator for area C. The province is divided into three areas in the program. Area C is the Peace region.

"The demonstration plots will be included on farm tours and results will be discussed at future conservation seminars. Peace region farmers will be able to see for themselves the results of these farming methods in the clay and silty clay soils of their region," he says.

The region's producers recently had a chance to participate in a conservation tillage conference. The Peace chapter of the Alberta Conservation Tillage Society (ACTS) organized the conference with funding assistance from CARTT.

ACTS spokesman Cliff Mikula says the conference was the first of its kind in the region and organizers were pleased with the turnout of about 60 farmers. He says the group hopes such events will be more common in the future.

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Conservation activities in the Peace (cont'd)

Soil specialists and researchers spoke at the conference as well as representatives from equipment and fertilizer companies. Results from zero and minimum tillage plots at Fort Vermilion, Nampa, Baytree and Dawson Creek were also discussed.

CARTT's objective is to develop and transfer appropriate conservation tillage and cropping technology which will minimize soil degradation and sustain economic crop production.

CARTT application forms are available from Agricultural Service Board fieldmen, district agriculturists and PFRA offices. The next deadline for application submissions to CARTT area co-ordinators is June 2.

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For immediate release

# Winter plant damage in your yard

Brown needles on your evergreen trees may be a sign of winter injury, but don't panic because the trees can recover.

"In most cases damage isn't severe enough to kill the trees. Needles that turn brown are dead and will fall off," says Pam North, information officer at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. "Severity of the damage will vary. Some plants may lose all their needles, others may lose just those on the ends of branches or on one side."

Winter injury can be seen as needles turn from green to light tan or reddish brown. Colorado spruce takes on a purplish color. This damage usually is at the ends of branches and moves inwards. It is caused by desiccation, or drying out, of the foliage.

"Warm temperatures and reflected light off the snow cause the needles to lose moisture. With the ground still frozen, the roots are unable to replace this moisture and the needles dry out.

"Usually this type of damage is seen more on the south and west side of trees and on evergreens such as junipers and cedars planted on the south and west side of buildings," says North.

There are several ways to deal with winter injured evergreens, she says. "The trees shouldn't be watered until the ground has thawed out and it appears that moisture is needed."

Dead areas can be pruned, but North cautions to wait until you are sure which parts of the tree are dead. "Even if old needles are dead, trees still might get new growth at the ends of branches," she says. Light fertilization to stimulate growth can also be used, but not until mid-May.

North says another common spring problem is snow mould, a cottony white or grey film covering grass. The mould is a fungus that grows at low temperatures under the snow.

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Winter plant damage in your yard (cont'd)

"It's been more of a problem this year because the snow has melted slowly," she says. In severe cases the mould can kill lawn, and if grass doesn't grow back, then it must be reseeded.

Sweeping or raking the mould is one way to control its growth. "As soon as you can walk on the lawn, get out and sweep or rake it to break up the mould. Raking should be done lightly, so the grass isn't pulled out. Breaking up the mould allows the grass to dry and stops the growth of fungus."

In areas where snow is melting slowly, North says to spread out the drifts to speed up melting.

For more information about winter injury to evergreen trees or snow mould, contact North at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton at 472-6043.

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Contact: Pam North
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April 24, 1989
For immediate release

Glossary provides definitions of management terms

Alberta Agriculture has a new publication that will help you if you've been confused by specialized words and phrases such as diminishing returns and full carrying charges.

The "Glossary of Farm Business Management Terms" deals particularly with terms people need to be know to use material written about farm management and to understand many of their business and legal transactions.

"Anyone who has ever read an article on interest compounding and has been left wondering about the meaning of terms such as future value, present value and amortization would find this a useful reference," says Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds.

The glossary is a reference for both the public and people who provide information, he says. "One of the Glossary's purposes is to encourage more consistent and acceptable use of the terms related to farm business management."

Edwards developed the publication with definitions contributed by other farm business management branch members, other Alberta Agriculture staff and members of the Alberta Agriculture Economics Association.

Copies of the glossary are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or from the Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, Information Services, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6 by quoting agdex number 818-36.

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Conta' : Craig Edwards
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# Tax planning guide available

Alberta farmers who want information on tax planning can get the latest version of "Tax Management Strategies for Alberta Farmers" at any Alberta Agriculture district office.

"Tax reform has brought many changes to tax law pertaining to agriculture," says Merle Good, a tax specialist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "This 'after tax reform' version of the publication provides up-to-date information on these changes."

The revised version of the publication looks at tax law changes in reporting income, income averaging, capital cost allowance, investment tax credits, sale of quota and capital gains. Specific reference is made to the new rules on farm losses and the add back of purchased inventory effective in 1989, says Good.

As well, the publication looks at the effect of tax changes on estate planning, how property is transferred and how the farm is organized. Specific implications for sole proprietorships, partnerships, joint ventures and corporations are outlined, he adds.

"The publication wasn't meant as a complete tax planning guide," says Good, "but it should enable farm families to ask the right questions when considering the future of their operation."

Good and Brock Allison, a chartered accountant with Deloitte, Haskins and Sells revised and updated the existing tax management publication. The publication was a joint project of Alberta Agriculture and the accounting firm. It is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices or the Albert Agriculture Publications Office, Information Services, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, T6H 5T6 by quoting agdex 837.

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Contact: Merle Good
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# New conservation and development branch head

Alberta Agriculture's new conservation and development branch head brings a wealth of experience to his position.

John Hermans had been acting branch head and officially took over the job at the beginning of the month. Hermans has been with Alberta Agriculture since 1975, starting with the soils section of the irrigation division's land classification branch in Lethbridge.

He moved to Edmonton two years later to become supervisor of soil conservation for the soils branch. With a department reorganization in 1983, Hermans became head of the soil conservation section in the newly formed conservation and development branch.

JOHN HERMANS

Before joining the department, Hermans was an instructor at the Vermilion College (now Lakeland College) and the Hinton Forestry School. He also acquired a thorough knowledge of the province's soil resources as an surveyor during his undergraduate years.

"Over the years I've been concerned with the problems I've seen and have been actively involved in promoting conservation. Awareness and education have always been key components of my efforts. I've been involved with many projects working with Agricultural Service Boards, farm organizations and farmers over the years. I'm looking forward to continuing to work with them on projects and programs in the future," he says.

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# Vermilion has new district home economist

Vermilion has been living up to its reputation as a friendly community says its new district home economist.

Deborah Swonek says she has been busy since she started her new job and the community has made her feel welcome. "I've received many invitations to become involved with community events."

DEBORAH SWONEK

Her first experience as district home economist was as a summer assistant in Rocky Mountain House in 1987. She graduated from the University of Alberta with a BSc in home economics in 1988.

As district home economist Swonek is responsible for providing information to farm families in a variety areas from finance and consumer education to nutrition and clothing and textiles. She will also work closely with 4-H clubs and organizations.

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Contact: Deborah Swonek
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For immediate release

New district home economist in Claresholm

North eastern Alberta was where Claresholm's new district home economist was born and grew-up, but her career with Alberta Agriculture has taken her to the southern part of the province.

Brenda McCracken was raised on her family's mixed grain and cattle farm south of Hardisty. She attended University of Alberta graduating in 1988 with a BSc in home economics majoring in family studies.

BRENDA MCCRACKEN

McCracken joined Alberta Agriculture as a district home economist summer assistant in Medicine Hat in 1988. She also served as acting as district home economist in Oyen from September, 1988 to February, 1989.

As district home economist she will provide information to farm families about finance, consumer education, food and nutrition, housing, clothing and textiles and 4-H activities.

"I'm really enjoying the Clareholm community. The people are friendly and easy to work with," she says.

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Contact: Brenda McCracken
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